



THE LIFE AND TIMES OF
KING
GEORGE VI

1895-1952

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF KING GEORGE VI

160 Pages. Nearly 200 Photographs

*17 pages of introductory material including
the text of Mr. Churchill's broadcast tribute
of 7 February, 1952*

THIS complete pictorial record of the life of His Majesty the late King George VI will be treasured in homes throughout the world as a worthy memento of a great Monarch who, by his simple humanity, devotion to duty, and service to his peoples, earned the deep affection of millions.

Within these pages, against the background of fifty-six momentous years, every phase of the late King's life is mirrored in nearly two hundred vivid, unforgettable photographs, supplemented by descriptive captions. Superb camera studies, recording historic events and the pageantry of State occasions, are intermingled with delightful pictures giving intimate glimpses of the late King's personal life, to form one of the most graphic and moving stories ever told. Some memorable extracts from His Majesty's own speeches are reproduced.

Here are scenes from King George's childhood and early manhood, his years as Duke of York, world traveller, sportsman, devoted husband and father, happy Royal Family pictures, memories of the funeral of King George V, the Coronation, Royal tour of Canada and U.S.A., the war years, visits to blitzed cities, visits to war zones, Victory celebrations, Royal tour of South Africa, Princess Elizabeth's wedding, Royal Silver Wedding, the Royal grandchildren, opening of the Festival of Britain. Finally, there are the impressive scenes of the lying in State and of the Royal Funeral, including some of the most remarkable camera studies of our day. It is, in truth, a book to treasure for a lifetime.

*The portrait of His Majesty, the late King George VI,
which appears on this jacket is by Dorothy Wilding*

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King George VI in Field-Marshals uniform and the robes of Sovereign of the Order of the Garter, from the painting by Maurice Codner, R.P., for the Honourable Artillery Company.

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Contents

KING GEORGE VI: AN APPRECIATION *p. 5*

TRIBUTE BY THE PRIME MINISTER *p. 13*

THE EARLY YEARS *p. 19*

THE FIRST YEARS ON THE THRONE *p. 57*

THE WAR YEARS *p. 91*

THE LAST YEARS *p. 121*



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FATHER AND DAUGHTER—ROYAL LODGE, WINDSOR, 1946

King George VI: An Appreciation



he death of King George VI, on 6 February, 1952, brought to a close a life unsurpassed during the last thousand years of English history for quiet heroism and selfless devotion to the royal duties laid upon him. His was an early death. He was only fifty-six. For the last fifteen years he had been called upon to bear the unexpected burden of the Crown and the vast responsibilities of rule over the greatest Empire and Commonwealth the world has known. Those fifteen years had seen his realm exposed to the most widespread and penetrating attacks and deadliest perils in all its history. King George himself was physically delicate and handicapped. But his courage, his conscientiousness, his diligence, his warm sympathy with his people never failed. His life presents a flawless cameo of Royalty at its finest and best.

Prince Albert Frederick Arthur George, born on 14 December, 1895, was the second son of the then Duke of York—subsequently King George V. There seemed at the time little prospect that Prince Albert would ever be called on to ascend the Throne, and he was prepared, not for the Crown, but for the Royal Navy. When he was just fourteen he was sent to the Royal Naval Training College at Osborne, and then to Dartmouth. He had to submit to all the rigour of the naval training, with its high professional standard. After completing his training at Dartmouth and making a long cruise in the cadet ship *Cumberland*, he was gazetted a midshipman and joined H.M.S. *Collingwood*. His rank secured him no privileged treatment, and he wished for none.

His love for a naval career was stronger than his physique. A month after the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 he had to be hurried ashore to undergo an operation for appendicitis. He worried his way back to the Fleet in February, 1915, though still suffering internal trouble, and was aboard the *Collingwood* in May, 1916, at the Battle of Jutland, and was mentioned in dispatches for his cool courage while serving in the ship's fore-turret. But his health kept failing him. In November, 1917, duodenal ulcer was diagnosed. A short time afterwards he underwent a severe operation which left him with his health too impaired to resume a naval career.

It is a bitter blow to a young fellow when he has to abandon a profession he loves and has trained for diligently and well. But the Prince swallowed his medicine and took up work with the Royal Naval Air Service. In July, 1919, he secured his certificate as an air pilot, and in the autumn went up to Cambridge for a short course in history, economics and civics. In June, 1920, King George V created him Duke of York.

At London society functions after the war the young Duke met on several occasions Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, the youngest daughter of the Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorne. In August, 1920, he and his sister Princess Mary joined a house-party at the Earl's historic seat in Scotland, Glamis Castle. The Countess was unwell, but Elizabeth acted as chatelaine and welcomed the royal visitors. They had known one another as children; but they were children no longer, and the Duke fell firmly in love with his beautiful and competent young hostess. In due course the Duke won his father's consent to his suit for the hand of Lady Elizabeth. Gossip has it that her own consent was harder to gain; but in January, 1923, she accepted his proposal, and their betrothal was formally announced on the 16th. They were married in Westminster Abbey on 26 April, 1923, by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Two daughters were born to them: Princess Elizabeth—now Queen Elizabeth II—in 1926; and Princess Margaret in 1930.

Among the many wise and worthy acts of King George VI, none was more providentially inspired than his choice of a wife. He could have found no other better equipped by birth, training and character to enrich him with the domestic loyalty and happiness that have marked their married life, and the unfailing support and able co-operation that were to sustain him in those heavy tasks and appalling burdens which the unknown future was to lay upon him.

In the years following his marriage the Duke of York had to take an ever-growing share of the public functions at which the presence of Royalty is traditionally expected. Thus in 1924-5 he and his wife—who was affectionately called "The Little Duchess"—visited Kenya, Uganda and the Sudan. In 1927 they made an extensive tour of Australia and New Zealand. At home the Duke acted as President of the Wembley Exhibition in 1925, in succession to his brother, the Prince of Wales.

Few can realize what an ordeal these functions were for the Duke, or what fine courage he showed in facing them. For from early boyhood he had been handicapped by an impediment in his speech which made him tongue-tied and silent, and bred in him a nervous shyness. He fought against this with stubborn determination, but with little success, until in 1926 he came upon a speech specialist from Australia, Mr. Logue, who was able to help him to master the defect. Under Mr. Logue's tuition he persevered



KING GEORGE AND QUEEN ELIZABETH—BUCKINGHAM PALACE, 1945



ANNIVERSARY SERVICE AT EXETER

The King, Queen and Princess Margaret, during a tour of the West Country, visited Exeter, where, on 10 July, 1950, they attended a Thanksgiving Service in the Cathedral in commemoration of the nine-hundredth anniversary of the founding of the See of Exeter.

doggedly till he achieved a workable fluency of speech; but the burden was a cruel one for a man fated to appear constantly before the public.

King George VI's engineering studies during his naval training left him with a keen interest in industrial conditions. He delighted to visit engineering shops, to drive trains and trams, to go down mines, look in at workers' cottages and chat with the people. After the end of the First World War he became President of the Boys' Welfare Society, which presently merged into the Industrial Welfare Society; and when the National Playing Fields Association was founded in 1925 he became its President. As a means of breaking down class barriers he had the brilliant inspiration of setting up, in 1921, the Duke of York's Summer Camps, to which two lads apiece from each of a hundred industrial concerns and a hundred public schools are invited, mixing together in a camping holiday; and nothing pleased him better than to go down every year for a day to share the camp life of these young fellows.

The hardest crisis of his life came in December, 1936, when his elder brother, King Edward VIII, who had succeeded George V in January, decided to abdicate. The Duke of York tried in vain to change his brother's purpose. He himself was very far indeed from coveting the throne. With his shy, retiring disposition and his physical disabilities he felt unfitted for the heavy burden of kingship. For some time he is reported to have held out against the pressure of the Prime Minister and the Archbishop; but at last, for the country's sake, he reluctantly consented to fill the place that Edward had left vacant. The relief and joy of a nation and Commonwealth at this solution of the abdication crisis were unbounded.

Shadows of approaching war darkened swiftly across Europe during the next years. But before the storm burst King George and Queen Elizabeth paid in May and June, 1939, a State visit to Canada, and turned south to the United States, where they received delighted welcomes in Washington and New York. The warm goodwill evoked by this friendly gesture was of no small value to Britain, and thereby to the cause of world freedom, when less than three months later Hitler plunged the world again into war.

It is indelibly written on the memory of the British people how nobly the King and Queen bore themselves during the horrors of that conflict. They sought no safety, but stayed on at Buckingham Palace while bombs fell around them—one indeed damaging the Palace before their eyes. Where any town was blitzed, they might be expected next day, heartening the sufferers with their presence and sympathy. Repeatedly King George visited the battle zones. Only ten days after the D-day landing on the

French coast he went across to see for himself the progress of his troops. He and the Queen became familiar visitors to munition factories and war camps.

At the close of hostilities King George was confronted by the novel situation of a Labour administration backed for the first time in British history by a large parliamentary majority and intent on far-reaching changes in domestic and imperial affairs. His conduct in face of critical issues that arose was faultless constitutionally; and the human touch he brought to his relations with Labour Ministers deepened their regard for the real value of the British monarchy.

In 1947 the King took his family with him on a visit to South Africa, where they were greeted with a display of loyal affection that might well surprise those aware of the lingering racial discords in the Union. Soon after their return the nation learned with delight of the betrothal of Princess Elizabeth to Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten, and on 20 November they were married in Westminster Abbey. On the previous day the bridegroom-to-be was raised to the British peerage with the title of Duke of Edinburgh.

The Silver Wedding of King George and Queen Elizabeth in April, 1948, was made an occasion for a renewed demonstration of the love felt for them by their people. But in November came the first sign of the King's failing health: a trouble in the arteries of his legs for which an operation presently became necessary. By the spring of 1951 signs of growing weakness showed themselves. In September he underwent an operation on his lung, and it was clear to medical experts that his condition was serious. Yet the closing weeks of his life were happy. He had a cheerful Christmas with his family at Sandringham, and at the end of January, 1952, went to the airport to see Princess Elizabeth and her husband off to East Africa. During his last days he enjoyed some shooting, a sport of which he was very fond, and paid visits to friends. On 5 February, after a happy day with friends, he retired to rest. Quietly, in his sleep, he passed on to wake in that land where night never falls.

At the news of his passing there was sorrow everywhere for the loss, not only of a king, but of a brother; for in a quite unique degree King George was at one with his people. No exceptional brilliance set him apart; while the happiness of his family life, the unaffected sincerity of his Christian faith, the friendliness and ready sympathy he showed to everyone, regardless of class or wealth, kindled in them a feeling of intimate fellowship. He was no remote potentate, but their brother King. And while they mourn, they thank God at every remembrance of him.

MALCOLM THOMSON



AIRCRAFT HONOUR THE KING'S BIRTHDAY

In recent years the King's official birthday has been honoured by the Royal Air Force as well as by the Brigade of Guards in its Trooping of the Colour ceremony. On 7 June, 1951, members of the Royal Family watched from the balcony of Buckingham Palace as ninety-six jet-fighters of the Royal Air Force and the Royal Canadian Air Force roared overhead in salute.



Tribute by the Prime Minister

THE RT. HON.

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL, O.M., C.H., M.P.



When the death of the King was announced to us yesterday morning there struck a deep and solemn note in our lives which, as it resounded far and wide, stilled the clatter and traffic of twentieth-century life in many lands, and made countless millions of human beings pause and look around them. A new sense of values took, for the time being, possession of human minds, and mortal existence presented itself to so many at the same moment in its serenity and in its sorrow, in its splendour and in its pain, in its fortitude and in its suffering.

The King was greatly loved by all his peoples. He was respected as a man and as a prince far beyond the many realms over which he reigned. The simple dignity of his life, his manly virtues, his sense of duty—alike as a ruler and a servant of the vast spheres and communities for which he bore responsibility—his gay charm and happy nature, his example as a husband and a father in his own family circle, his courage in peace or war—all these were aspects of his character which won the glint of admiration, now here, now there, from the innumerable eyes whose gaze falls upon the Throne.

We thought of him as a young naval lieutenant in the great Battle of Jutland. We thought of him when calmly, without ambition or want of self-confidence, he assumed the heavy burden of the Crown and succeeded his brother whom he loved and to whom he had rendered perfect loyalty. We thought of him, so faithful in his study and discharge of State affairs; so strong in his devotion to the enduring honour of our country; so self-restrained in his judgments of men and affairs; so uplifted above the clash of party politics, yet so attentive to them; so wise and shrewd in judging between what matters and what does not

All this we saw and admired. His conduct on the Throne may well be a model and a guide to constitutional Sovereigns throughout the world today and also in future generations. The last few months of King George's life, with all the pain and physical stresses that he endured—his life hanging by a thread from day to day, and

he all the time cheerful and undaunted, stricken in body but quite undisturbed and even unaffected in spirit—these have made a profound and an enduring impression and should be a help to all.

He was sustained not only by his natural buoyancy, but by the sincerity of his Christian faith. During these last months the King walked with death as if death were a companion, an acquaintance whom he recognized and did not fear. In the end death came as a friend, and after a happy day of sunshine and sport, and after “Good night” to those who loved him best, he fell asleep as every man or woman who strives to fear God and nothing else in the world may hope to do.

The nearer one stood to him the more these facts were apparent. But the newspapers and photographs of modern times have made vast numbers of his subjects able to watch with emotion the last months of his pilgrimage. We all saw him approach his journey’s end. In this period of mourning and meditation, amid our cares and toils, every home in all the realms joined together under the Crown may draw comfort for tonight and strength for the future from his bearing and his fortitude.

There was another tie between King George and his people. It was not only sorrow and affliction that they shared. Dear to the hearts and the homes of the people is the joy and pride of a united family. With this all the troubles of the world can be borne and all its ordeals at least confronted. No family in these tumultuous years was happier or loved one another more than the Royal Family around the King.

No Minister saw so much of the King during the war as I did. I made certain he was kept informed of every secret matter, and the care and thoroughness with which he mastered the immense daily flow of State papers made a deep mark on my mind.

Let me tell you another fact. On one of the days when Buckingham Palace was bombed the King had just returned from Windsor. One side of the courtyard was struck, and if the windows opposite out of which he and the Queen were looking had not been, by the mercy of God, open, they would both have been blinded by the broken glass instead of being only hurled back by the explosion. Amid all that was then going on, although I saw the King so often, I never heard of this episode till a long time after. Their Majesties never mentioned it or thought it of more significance than a soldier in their armies would of a shell bursting near him. This seems to me to be a revealing trait in the royal character.

There is no doubt that of all the institutions which have grown up among us over the centuries, or sprung into being in our lifetime, the constitutional monarchy is the most deeply founded and dearly cherished by the whole association of our peoples.

In the present generation it has acquired a meaning incomparably more powerful than anyone had dreamed possible in former times. The Crown has become the mysterious link, indeed I may say the magic link, which unites our loosely bound, but strongly interwoven Commonwealth of nations, states, and races. . . .

For fifteen years King George VI was king. Never at any moment in all the perplexities at home and abroad, in public or in private, did he fail in his duties. Well does he deserve the farewell salute of all his governments and peoples.

It is at this time that our compassion and sympathy go out to his consort and widow. Their marriage was a love match with no idea of regal pomp or splendour. Indeed, there seemed to be before them only the arduous life of royal personages, denied so many of the activities of ordinary folk and having to give so much in ceremonial public service. May I say—speaking with all freedom—that our hearts go out tonight to that valiant woman, with famous blood of Scotland in her veins, who sustained King George through all his toils and problems, and brought up with their charm and beauty the two daughters who mourn their father today. May she be granted strength to bear her sorrow.

To Queen Mary, his mother, another of whose sons is dead—the Duke of Kent having been killed on active service—there belongs the consolation of seeing how well he did his duty and fulfilled her hopes, and of knowing how much he cared for her.

Now I must leave the treasures of the past and turn to the future. Famous have been the reigns of our queens. Some of the greatest periods in our history have unfolded under their sceptre. Now that we have the second Queen Elizabeth, also ascending the Throne in her twenty-sixth year, our thoughts are carried back nearly four hundred years to the magnificent figure who presided over and, in many ways, embodied and inspired the grandeur and genius of the Elizabethan age.

Queen Elizabeth II, like her predecessor, did not pass her childhood in any certain expectation of the Crown. But already we know her well, and we understand why her gifts, and those of her husband, the Duke of Edinburgh, have stirred the only part of the Commonwealth she has yet been able to visit. She has already been acclaimed as Queen of Canada.

We make our claim too, and others will come forward also, and tomorrow the proclamation of her sovereignty will command the loyalty of her native land and of all other parts of the British Commonwealth and Empire. I, whose youth was passed in the august, unchallenged and tranquil glories of the Victorian era, may well feel a thrill in invoking once more the prayer and the anthem, "God save the Queen!"

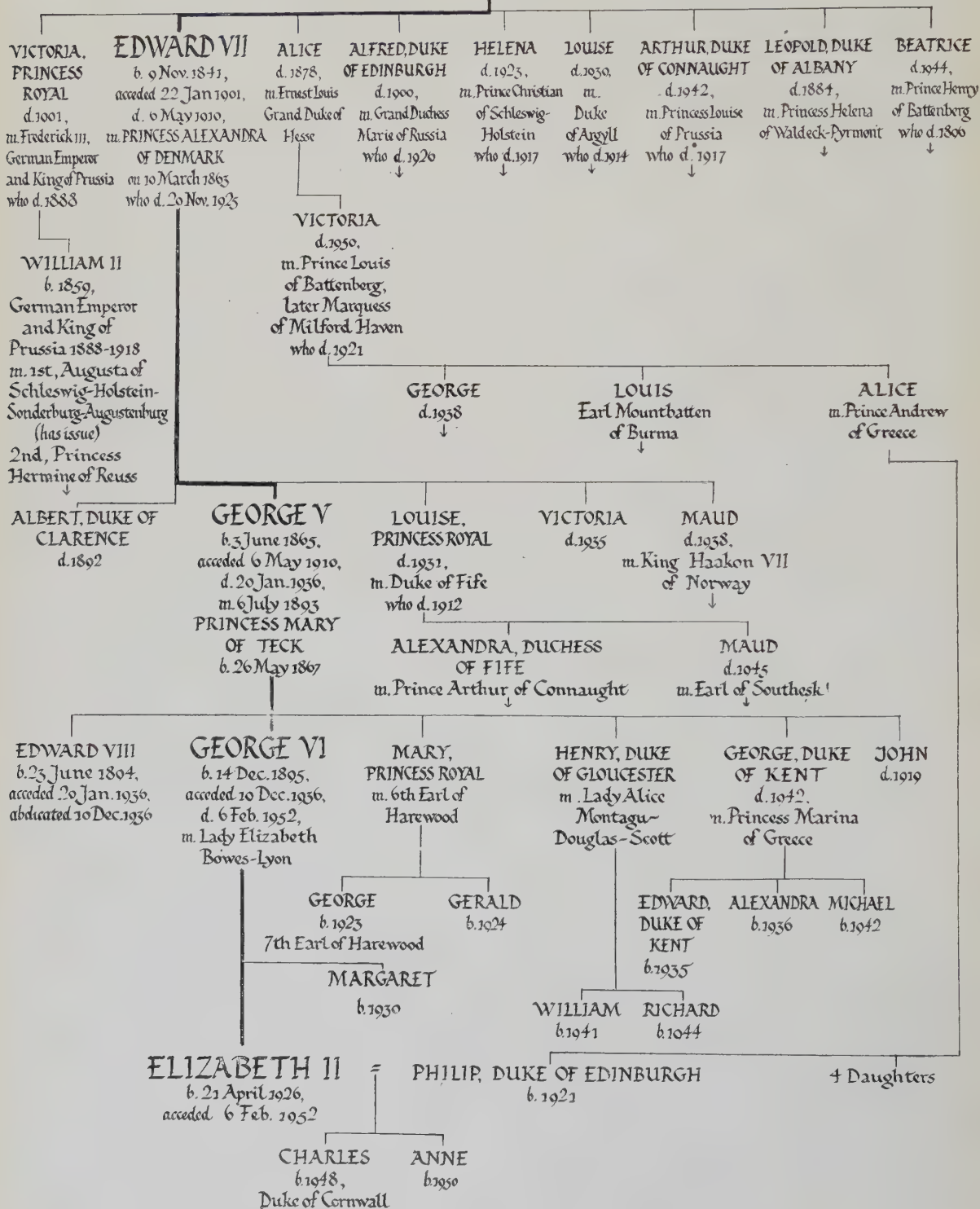
GENEALOGICAL TREE OF THE ROYAL FAMILY

QUEEN VICTORIA

b. 24 May 1819
 acceded 20 June 1837
 d. 22 Jan. 1901
 Reigned 63 years 7 months

PRINCE ALBERT OF SAXE-COBURG AND GOTHA. PRINCE CONSORT

b. 26 Aug. 1819
 d. 14 Dec. 1861



Queen
Victoria



Prince
Albert



King Edward VII



Queen Alexandra



Princess Alice



King George V



Queen Mary

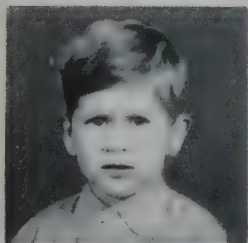


King Edward VIII

King
George VI



Queen
Elizabeth



Prince Charles



Queen Elizabeth II



Duke of Edinburgh



Princess Anne



WITH QUEEN VICTORIA AT OSBORNE

This photograph, taken at Osborne in the Isle of Wight in 1900, shows Queen Victoria with four of her great-grandchildren. In front is Prince Albert, later King George VI, then aged four. Behind him is Princess Mary (the Princess Royal) and, in the centre, Prince Edward (the Duke of Windsor). Queen Victoria is holding Prince Henry (the Duke of Gloucester).

The Early Years

1895-1936



hen it was announced that the Duchess of York had given birth to a son at York Cottage, Sandringham, on 14 December, 1895, most people who rejoiced at the news must have recognized in the birth an assurance that the succession to the Throne was now more secure, but were less likely to have suspected the arrival of a future Sovereign. For the baby, who was christened Albert Frederick Arthur George, was the second son of his parents, whose first son—Prince Edward—had been born during the previous year. Prince Albert's father, the Duke of York, was himself a second son. His elder brother, the Duke of Clarence, the first son of the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, had died suddenly in 1892, thus bringing the Duke of York into the direct line of succession. In 1895 Queen Victoria was still alive and two generations separated Prince Albert's generation from that of the Sovereign. Almost forty-one years were to pass before the Prince was to be called to take upon himself the supreme office of Sovereignty.

In the years between the young Prince had followed the traditional path selected for the younger sons of British monarchs. Not for him the training of a future king and an expectation of a major part in the greatest responsibilities and ceremonial occasions of State. Rather for him the lesser duties by which the Royal Family lends dignity and emphasis to the civic and social life of the nation. This, then, was the course Prince Albert followed through the reign of his father—a period in the Services; then to Cambridge for a while; the conferring of the Dukedom of York by the King; official visits abroad; marriage, followed by the birth of two daughters, Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret; and generally the continuous round of royal duties. Something of this life is illustrated and described on the following pages.

When the Duke's elder brother came to the Throne on the death of his father, King George V, in 1936, the nation looked forward to another long reign. Yet by the last month of the year a constitutional crisis, which came to a head with astonishing rapidity, burst upon a surprised people. On 10 December King Edward VIII abdicated, and the next day Albert, Duke of York was proclaimed king as King George VI.



EARLY YEARS

These pictures show (*left*) Prince Albert at about the age of a year, and (*below*) as one of a family group in 1906 at Abergeldie, in Scotland, where the family often stayed. By this time Queen Victoria had been dead over five years and the Prince's grandfather, King Edward VII, was on the throne; his father was now Prince of Wales. In this picture are, standing from right to left, Prince Albert, Prince Edward, Prince George (later Duke of Kent), Princess (later Queen) Mary holding the baby Prince John (who died in 1919), Princess Mary and the Prince of Wales (later King George V); seated in front is Prince Henry.





PRINCE ALBERT AND HIS TUTOR

Prince Albert was not sent to school for his education. When young he had a governess, and later he and his eldest brother shared a tutor, Mr. Hansell, pictured here with young Prince Albert and Lord Desborough at an Amateur Athletic Association meeting in 1908.

FUNERAL OF KING EDWARD VII

After a short illness Prince Albert's grandfather, King Edward VII, died on 6 May, 1910, and three days later his father was proclaimed king as George V. The body of King Edward lay in State at Buckingham Palace, and later in Westminster Hall where over half a million people filed past the catafalque. King Edward was buried in St. George's Chapel, Windsor. Past the massive walls of the great castle, and the statue of Queen Victoria, moved the cortège on its way to the main gate of the castle. Immediately behind the new king followed Prince Edward and Prince Albert in naval uniform. Nine kings walked in the funeral procession: on the right of King George V was the German Kaiser Wilhelm II (both of them were grandsons of Queen Victoria), and after them came the Kings of Greece, Denmark, Norway, Spain, Portugal, the Belgians and Bulgaria. The death of King Edward, less obviously perhaps than that of Queen Victoria but none the less significantly, marked the end of an era. His buoyant character did not conceal his appreciation of the dangerous rivalries arising in Europe, and his diplomacy and tact had, not without reason, earned him the sobriquet of "the Peacemaker." But the delicate balance of power in Europe was not to be preserved much longer in peace. Just over four years later the two cousins who walked behind King Edward VII's coffin, King George V and the Kaiser, were to find themselves the leaders of nations at war with one another.







THE SAILOR PRINCE

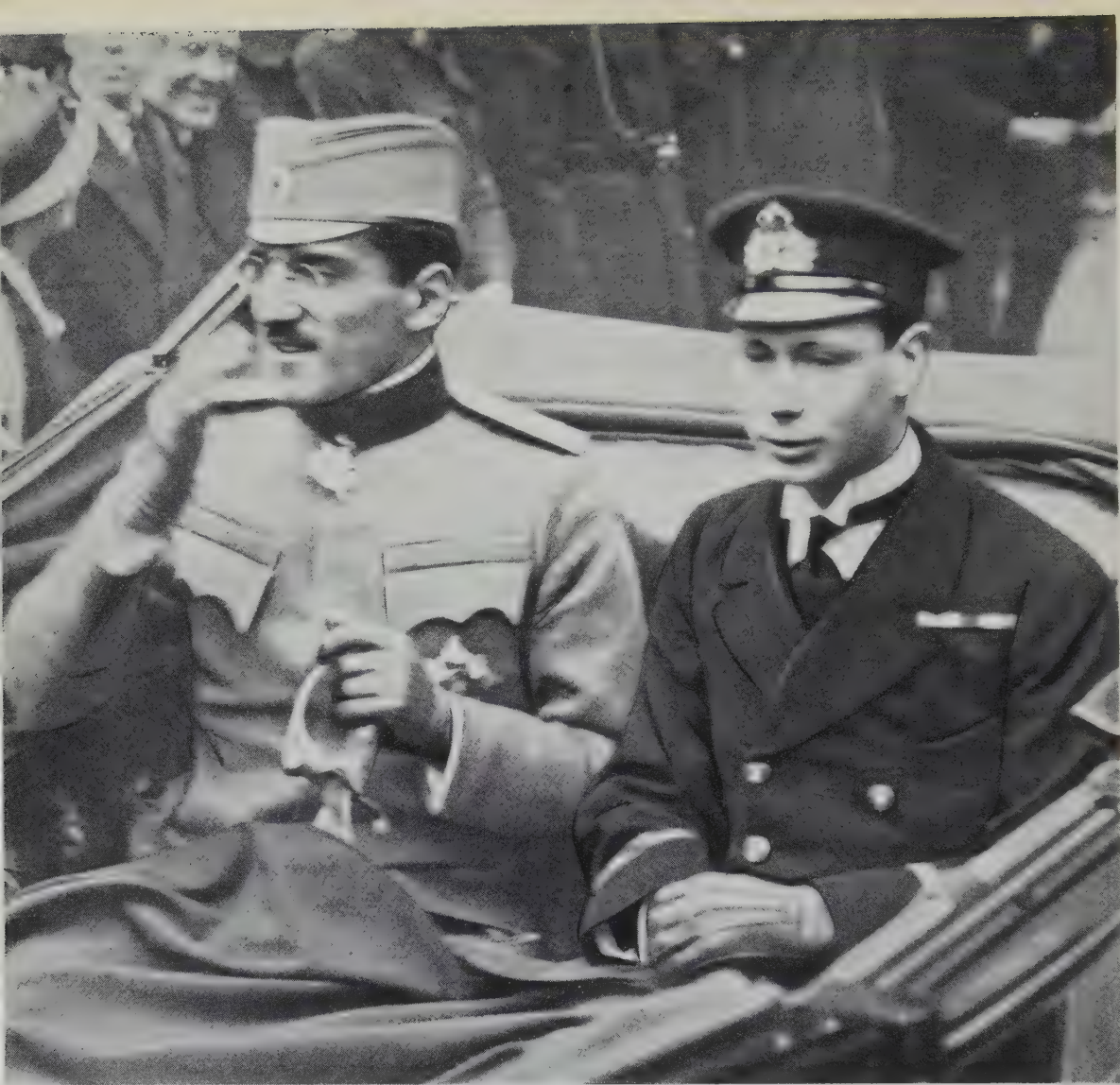
Like his father, Prince Albert was intended for a naval career. He entered the Royal Naval College, Osborne—formerly the much-favoured residence of Queen Victoria—early in 1909, and from there he went on to Dartmouth, from which he passed out in 1912. After service in the training-ship *Cumberland* he was appointed a midshipman in the *Collingwood*. These pictures show him as a cadet (*above, left*), during training at Devonport (second from the left inside the carriage) (*below*), and later, after promotion to lieutenant (*above, right*).



REVIEW OF THE FLEET AT SPITHEAD

Prince Albert was present at the naval review at Spithead in 1914 just before the outbreak of the First World War, but from then on his naval career was dogged by ill-health. Twice he was invalided from his ship and for a while he served ashore at the Admiralty. He was, however, able to return to sea in time to take part in the Battle of Jutland, at which he was on duty in the fore-turret of the *Collingwood* and where he earned a Mention in Despatches.





WARTIME DUTIES

Even while in the Navy certain duties of State fell to Prince Albert. Early in 1916 Crown Prince Alexander of Serbia paid an official visit to London and was welcomed at Charing Cross Station and escorted to Buckingham Palace by Prince Albert (*above*). Eighteen years later the Crown Prince, then King Alexander of Yugoslavia, and M. Barthou, the French Foreign Minister, fell to the bullets of the assassin Kalemén at Marseilles. In September, 1916, during a further bout of ill-health, Prince Albert was invalided out of the Navy. However, he was well enough in 1918 to take flying lessons with the newly formed Royal Air Force. He obtained his "wings"—though not until after the Armistice—and rose to the rank of squadron-leader before leaving the active list. Shortly after the Armistice Prince Albert accompanied his father on a visit to the war-scarred towns of France and Belgium. The photograph (*right*) shows King George V and his son, with the staff officers, outside the ruins of Ypres Cathedral, the centre of some of the fiercest fighting in the war.





DUKE OF YORK

On his twenty-first birthday in 1916 Prince Albert had been invested with the Order of the Garter. Now, in 1920, in the Birthday Honours King George conferred on him the title of Duke of York—the same title that the King had himself held. On 23 June of that year he took his seat in the House of Lords—the photograph (*left*) shows the new Duke in his peer's robes—when he was sponsored by his uncle, the Duke of Connaught, and the Duke of Northumberland. As a Royal Duke he now had to face a great increase in the volume of his public duties, and in this connexion he interested himself particularly in two aspects of the national life—industry, of which he acquired an intimate and varied knowledge, and youth welfare. He became the first president of the Industrial Welfare Society and in 1921 founded his annual Duke of York's Boys' Camp, illustrated on later pages of this book. In the year following he represented the King at State functions in Yugoslavia and Rumania.

THE LIGHTER SIDE

In spite of many serious preoccupations the Duke of York was ready to enjoy the lighter side of life, especially when allied to a cause in which he was interested. In July, 1920, he went to a fête at Hall Place, Bexley, in aid of the Glentworth Ex-Servicemen's Club, where he had a few throws at Aunt Sally (*top, right*). At Great Bookham Fête in 1922 he enjoyed all the fun of the fair, and was photographed riding on a roundabout (*bottom, right*).





ROYAL ENGAGEMENT

Few Royal engagements have been more popular than that of the Duke of York to Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon, youngest daughter of the Earl and Countess of Strathmore, announced early in 1923. The informal picture (*above*), taken at Glamis Castle, the Scottish seat of the Earl of Strathmore, is one of the few photographs showing the Duke and his future Duchess before their engagement. Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon is seated in the centre with the Duke behind her. On his left is the Earl of Strathmore and on his right the Hon. David Bowes-Lyon. The lower photograph, taken about the same time, shows the Duke and Lady Elizabeth at a tennis party.



ROYAL WEDDING

On 26 April, 1923, the Duke of York and Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon were married in Westminster Abbey. The Archbishop of Canterbury officiated, and King George V, Queen Mary, Queen Alexandra, the Duke's brothers and the bride's parents were among the distinguished and brilliantly colourful assembly. Outside great crowds lined the wedding route.



THE HONEYMOON AND A NEW HOME

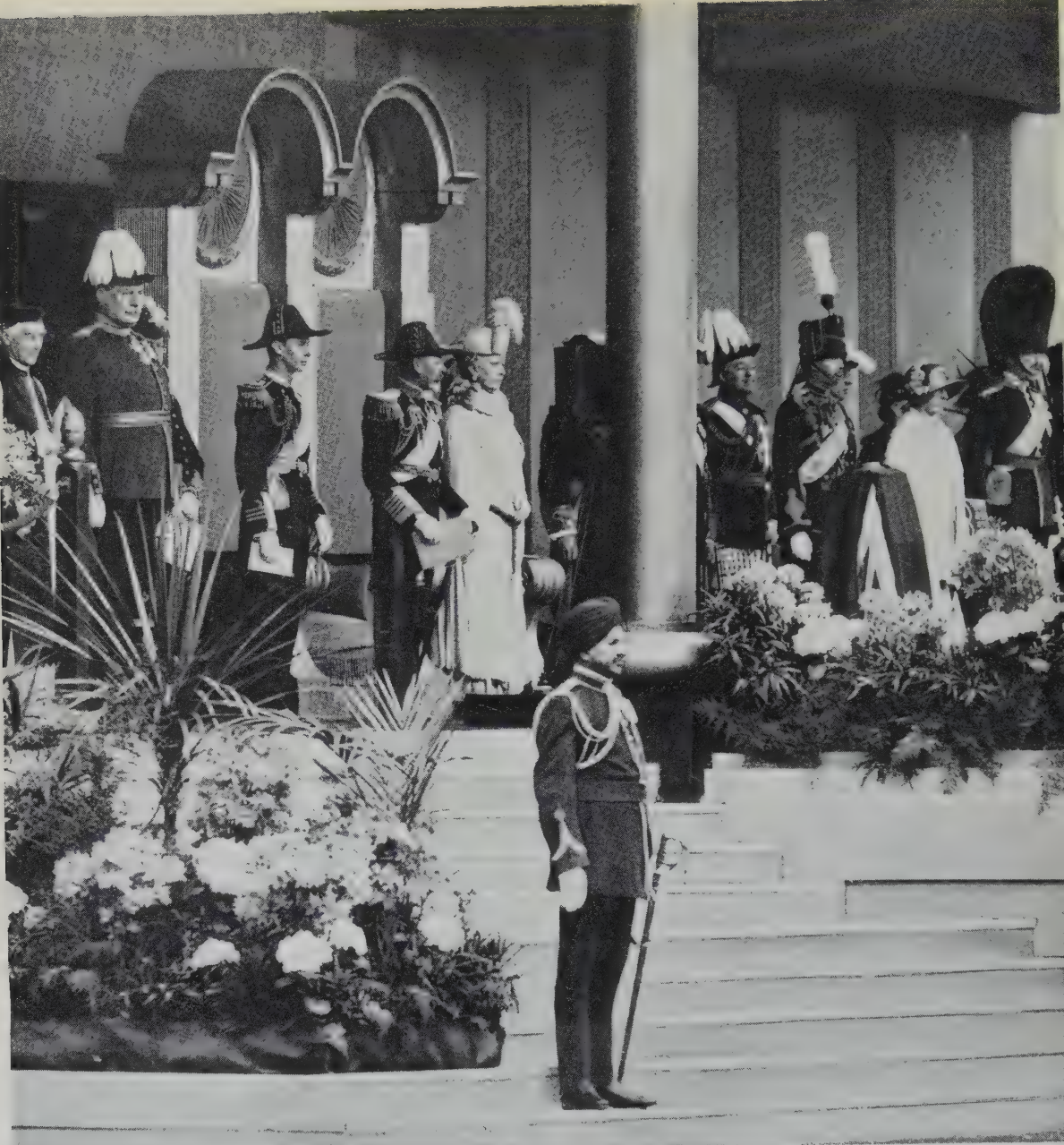
After the wedding the Duke and Duchess appeared on the balcony of Buckingham Palace to acknowledge the cheers of the enthusiastic crowd, and later, having driven through a farewell bombardment of rose petals from the Duke's brothers and the bridesmaids, they left the Palace to drive through the still crowded streets (*top, left*) to Waterloo Station. There they left by train for Polesden Lacey (*below*), near Bookham in Surrey, where the first part of the honeymoon was to be spent. During their stay at this beautiful house they were able to enjoy quiet walks in the country or golf in the grounds (*bottom, right*, the





Duke watching the Duchess putting). From Polesden Lacey they went to Glamis, where they stayed until the end of May, and the honeymoon ended with a fortnight at Frogmore, in Windsor Park. In the meantime White Lodge (*above*), Richmond Park, had been prepared for the newly married couple. The White Lodge was familiar to the Duke for it had been his parents' home, and though he had been born at Sandringham he had spent a considerable part of his childhood at the Lodge. So, too, had his mother, Queen Mary, for the Lodge had earlier been the home of her mother, the Duchess of Teck.





WEMBLEY EXHIBITION: THE OPENING

The great Empire Exhibition at Wembley, which King George V opened on St. George's Day, 23 April, 1924, was designed to show to the world the wealth, resources and essential unity of the British Empire. Two years earlier the first turf of the Exhibition site had been ceremonially cut by the Duke of York. On the opening day the King and Queen, accompanied by the Duke and other members of the Royal Family, drove in State to the exhibition. The Prince of Wales, as President, received them and asked the King to perform the opening ceremony. In the picture (*above*), taken on this occasion, the Duke stands on the right of his



AND A LESS FORMAL ROYAL OCCASION

father. On the right of the photograph Princess Mary can be seen standing between her husband, Viscount Lascelles, and Prince Henry. The next month a less formal visit was paid by the Duke to Wembley. With the Duchess and the Prince of Wales he visited the Amusement Park, where they were photographed about to start on a dizzy ride on the Giant Switchback (*above*). The next year the Duke and Duchess again visited the Amusement Park, when they rode in an aerial boat suspended from a ropeway. In two years the exhibition, which had cost over £4 million, attracted over twenty-seven million visitors.



BIRTH OF PRINCESS ELIZABETH

The birth of a daughter to the Duke and Duchess of York was a great national occasion, for the new Princess was third in the line of succession to the Throne. Princess Elizabeth was born at 17 Bruton Street, the London home of the Earl and Countess of Strathmore, on 21 April, 1926, and from then on the people of Britain—and of other countries—showed an unflagging interest in the progress and activities of the young Princess. This christening group of the baby Princess and her parents shows her wearing the robe of Brussels lace which had been worn by three previous generations of royal babies.

COMMENCEMENT OF IMPERIAL MISSION

In January, 1927, the Duke and Duchess of York set forth on a tour of Australia and New Zealand, leaving their daughter Elizabeth in the care of Queen Mary. The photograph shows them leaving 17 Bruton Street at the outset of their journey.





TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION

The official purposes of the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York to Australia were to preside over the inaugural ceremonies attendant upon the institution of Canberra as the new Commonwealth capital, and to open Parliament House in State. But these events were only to be the formal climax to a triumphant tour through New Zealand and every state in Australia. At a civic reception at Guildhall, given in his honour on his return to Britain, the Duke spoke of himself as a thorough optimist concerning the strength of the Imperial bond and the future prosperity of Australia and New Zealand. The photographs show (*left*) the Duke talking to a Maori chief at Rotorua, and (*below*) the royal couple adorned in Maori "mats." Opposite, a scene during the State opening of the Canberra Parliament.





THE DUKE OF YORK

The Duke of York was a keen sportsman and had a natural facility for playing most games well. His interest in lawn tennis, golf, polo, rugby, soccer, cricket, shooting and riding continued even after the assumption of the burdens of kingship had heavily curtailed the time he could spare to indulge in these sports as an active participant. In 1920 he won the R.A.F. Lawn Tennis Doubles Championship, partnered by Sir Louis Greig. In 1926 he made sporting history by being the first member of the Royal Family to enter for the Wimbledon Championships; partnered again by Sir Louis Greig, he was defeated in the first round of the men's doubles event by H. Roper Barrett and A. W. Gore. An excellent shot, he was also a good



AS A SPORTSMAN

golfer (handicap, 10), rider and polo player. In addition to the sports already mentioned, the Duke had a great fondness for fishing and sailing, and whenever opportunities of practising these activities presented themselves he would readily avail himself of them. As Duke and King he was keenly interested in the racecourse and in 1942 his horses won all but one of the five classic events—then run at Newmarket. In 1946 his filly, Hypericum, won the One Thousand Guineas. In these pictures he is seen in play during the 1926 Wimbledon Championships (*left*), on the polo field (1923) (*bottom, left*), driving off during a golf match in Glamorgan (1924) (*right*), and (*below*) riding to hounds with the Pytchley Hunt (1928).







THE ROUND OF DUTY

After his return from Australia in the summer of 1927 the Duke was to undertake no further trips to Commonwealth countries until after his accession. He now embarked in earnest upon the manifold duties of public service which devolve upon the younger son of a British Sovereign. In 1927, as President of the National Playing Fields Association, he opened the playing fields at Reading presented by Mr. Solly Joel; later in the same year he visited Glasgow. He also made official visits to such diverse organizations and institutions as the Smithfield Club Fat Stock Show, the Salvation Army, an East London housing estate, the Royal Marines Depot at Deal, and the Braemar Games. The Duke is here seen engaged in duties which were typical of his routine in these years. (*Left*) Empire Day inspection in Hyde Park (1928); he smiles at a little boy in sailor's uniform. (*Above*) The opening of the King George V Playing Fields at Hampton Wick (1930).



UNVEILING THE STATUE OF THE WARRIOR

In May, 1929, the Duke and Duchess of York took part in Edinburgh's celebration of the six-hundredth anniversary of King Robert the Bruce's first charter to the city. At Edinburgh



KING AT EDINBURGH'S CELEBRATIONS

Castle the Duke unveiled statues of Robert the Bruce, the warrior king, and Sir William Wallace, Guardian of Scotland. He is seen here during his speech to the assembled crowd.



SCOTTISH CEREMONIAL

On 21 May, 1929, the Duke of York opened the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland at Tolbooth Church, Edinburgh. The occasion was of more than usual importance, for it marked the union of the Church of Scotland and the United Free Church of Scotland. The Duke, dressed in full Highland costume and accompanied by the Duchess, drove from Holyroodhouse Palace to St. Giles's Cathedral and thence to Tolbooth Church. The Duke and Duchess are here seen leaving St. Giles's Cathedral after the service which preceded the opening of the Assembly.



METHODIST UNION

On 20 September, 1932, the opening session of a Conference to unite the three Methodist Churches of Great Britain was held at the Royal Albert Hall. The Conference of Wesleyan Methodists, Primitive Methodists and United Methodists approved the act of union, and their Presidents signed the Deed of Union. Dr. Scott-Lidgett, President of the Uniting Conference, is seen (*left*) adding his signature to the Deed. When the legal formalities were completed, the Duke of York (seated on Dr. Scott-Lidgett's right) read a message from the King and addressed the Conference.



BIRTH OF PRINCESS MARGARET ROSE

On 21 August, 1930, the nation learned with pleasure that the Duchess of York had given birth at Glamis Castle to a second daughter. The new addition to the family, seen above in the arms of her mother, was christened Margaret Rose in the Chapel at Buckingham Palace.



OPENING OF THE TEES BRIDGE

In February, 1934, the Duke and Duchess of York journeyed to Middlesbrough to open the Tees Bridge. The new bridge, which linked the North Riding of Yorkshire with Durham, could be raised a hundred feet by electric motors. The Duke and Duchess are seen above crossing the bridge with the mayor and some of the many spectators after the opening ceremony.



GOODWILL MISSIONS ABROAD

The Duke and Duchess of York made several visits to the Continent between their return from the Antipodean tour and their accession. In July, 1931, they attended the great French Colonial Exhibition in Paris at the invitation of Marshal Lyautey, and in July, 1935, visited the International Exhibition in Brussels. (*Above*) The Duchess samples a native sweet in the Morocco section of the French Colonial Exhibition; (*right*) the Duke and Duchess walk through Old Brussels during their visit to the International Exhibition.





KING GEORGE V'S

The year 1935 marked the Silver Jubilee of King George V and was the occasion of many celebrations and renewed expressions of loyalty in all countries of the British Commonwealth. On 6 May, 1935, the twenty-fifth anniversary of King George V's accession to the Throne, a thanksgiving service was held in St. Paul's Cathedral. The photograph above shows the Royal Family, after their return from the service, acknowledging from the balcony at Buckingham Palace the greetings of the great crowd assembled below them.





JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

The Duke and Duchess of York and the two Princesses are seen (*right*) passing along Fleet Street in a State landau on their way to St. Paul's. The celebrations at some of the principal cities of Britain were attended by the Royal Dukes, representing the King. The Prince of Wales went to Cardiff, the Duke of York to Edinburgh and the Duke of Gloucester to Northern Ireland. The photograph (*left*) shows a scene during the celebrations in Edinburgh, with the Duke of York inspecting a naval guard of honour in Princes Street.





DEATH OF

On 21 January, 1936, Britain and the Commonwealth learned with deep sorrow of the death of King George V at Sandringham. In London the news was marked by the firing of seventy-round salutes—one round for each year of the King's life—at the Tower of London (*above*) and in Hyde Park. After lying in State at Westminster Hall the body of



KING GEORGE V

the King was taken in procession to Paddington, with the Prince of Wales, who had now become King Edward VIII, and his brothers walking behind the coffin. From Paddington the body of the King was taken to Windsor. As the coffin sank into the sepulchre of St. George's Chapel (*above*), the Archbishop of Canterbury pronounced the committal.



HEIR-PRESUMPTIVE

The Duke of York had become Heir-Presumptive on his brother's accession to the Throne. Nevertheless, the greater part of the year 1936, which in its closing weeks was to bring about such a change in his life, was spent in continuing his normal duties as Duke of York. His leisure time was spent with his family at Royal Lodge, Windsor, and these pictures taken in the summer of 1936 show him relaxing there with his dogs: (*left*) Mimsy, his favourite Labrador, and a corgi keep the Duke company on the steps of Princess Elizabeth's cottage; (*below*) he pets Choo-Choo, a Tibetan lion dog, whilst his younger daughter looks on.





INSTRUMENT OF ABDICATION

I, Edward the Eighth, of Great Britain, Ireland, and the British Dominions Beyond the Seas, King, Emperor of India, do hereby declare My irrevocable determination to renounce the Throne for Myself and for My descendants, and My desire that effect should be given to this Instrument of Abdication immediately.

In token whereof I have hereunto set My hand this tenth day of December, nineteen hundred and thirty six, in the presence of the witnesses whose signatures are subscribed.

SIGNED AT
FORT BELVEDERE
IN THE PRESENCE
OF

Edward VIII

Albert

Henry

George

ABDICATION OF KING EDWARD VIII

On 10 December, after a constitutional crisis lasting eight days, King Edward VIII decided to abdicate, and Prince Albert, Duke of York, succeeded him as King George VI. King Edward VIII remained at his home at Fort Belvedere throughout the crisis, and it was there that he signed the Instrument of Abdication (*reproduced above*), which was witnessed by his three brothers. This was the last occasion on which the Duke of York officially signed himself Albert. Two days later he was proclaimed King, as George VI.



CORONATION OF KING GEORGE VI—WESTMINSTER ABBEY, 12 MAY, 1937

The First Years on the Throne

1936-1939



he Europe of 1936 was a troubled community of nations. The constitutional crisis which had brought King George VI to the Throne, large though it loomed in the minds of the people of Britain and the Commonwealth, only for a while directed attention away from the threatening trend of European affairs. Already the emergence of new militaristic movements in Germany and Italy were pointing the way—even if the western democracies of Britain and France failed to recognize it—towards a second world war. Against the background of the two situations, domestic and European, can be seen the first few years of King George VI's reign.

At home the festivities of the Coronation brought forth a great tide of enthusiasm from all parts of the country. In the months that followed, the King, loyally supported by his Queen and the two Princesses, demonstrated by his dignity and charm, understanding and humanity those outstanding qualities of kingship which by the end of the reign were to establish the monarchy more firmly in British hearts than it had ever been before. The King interested himself in all aspects of the national life, but particularly in youth welfare, which in the inter-war years had become a major preoccupation for the country as a whole. The new King as Duke of York had been actively concerned in the youth movement, and now as Sovereign he was able to give it a wider encouragement. He continued to take an intimate interest in his Boys' Camp which he had founded when he was Duke of York. Informally attired, he liked to join in the games and community singing at the camp.

The official visits of King George VI to France and the U.S.A., which, apart from the Coronation and the tour of Canada, were the outstanding events of the first years of the reign, contributed significantly to a closer relationship between those countries and Britain. At Washington President Roosevelt described the visit as "an occasion for festivities, but it is also fitting that we give thanks for the bonds of friendship that link our two peoples"; and the King, in his reply, said: "I pray that our great nations may ever in the future walk together along the path of friendship in a world of peace." Too soon was that peace to be broken, but the bonds of friendship withstood all stresses.



CORONATION OF KING GEORGE VI AND QUEEN ELIZABETH

Crowds started to line the route between Buckingham Palace and Westminster Abbey during the evening preceding the Coronation, and by early morning had swelled to gigantic size. The long and solemn coronation ceremony, which has remained unchanged in its essentials since it was celebrated by St. Dunstan for King Edgar the Peaceful in 973, lasted from 11 a.m. until 2.40 p.m. Besides the peers and peeresses of the realm and leaders from every walk of life, all the members of the Royal Family were present to support the new King and Queen. The pictures show: (*above*) the King leaving the Abbey and about to enter the State coach after the service; (*opposite*) part of the dense crowd at Marble Arch watching the procession entering Hyde Park on its journey back to the Palace.





ROYAL STATE COACH ON ITS WAY TO WESTMINSTER

The State coach carrying the King and Queen was drawn by eight Windsor Greys (four of which were bestridden by postilions in scarlet jackets), and flanked by footmen and Yeomen of the Guard. Close behind rode the Duke of Gloucester, in the uniform of a major-general;



ABBEY, PASSING THE CENOTAPH IN WHITEHALL.

the Duke of Kent; the Earl of Harewood; the Earl of Athlone; and Lord Louis Mountbatten. Two divisions of a sovereign's escort of the Life Guards preceded the coach and two more followed it. The procession is here seen in Whitehall on its journey to the Abbey.

CORONATION DAY SCENE OUTSIDE BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Evidence of the support which the new King and Queen, called to the Throne in such unhappy circumstances, could expect from their people was provided by the great crowd assembled outside the Palace and clamorous for a glimpse of their newly crowned Sovereign.





A KING'S DEDICATION

The great moment of the day for thousands of people arrived when the King and Queen appeared on the balcony of Buckingham Palace in their coronation regalia (*above*); with them were the Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret, wearing coronets. At eight o'clock in the evening the King broadcast to the nation and Empire from Buckingham Palace (*right*). In the broadcast he said: "The highest of distinctions is the service of others, and to the ministry of Kingship I have in your hearing dedicated myself, with the Queen at my side, in words of the deepest solemnity. We will, God helping us, faithfully discharge our trust."





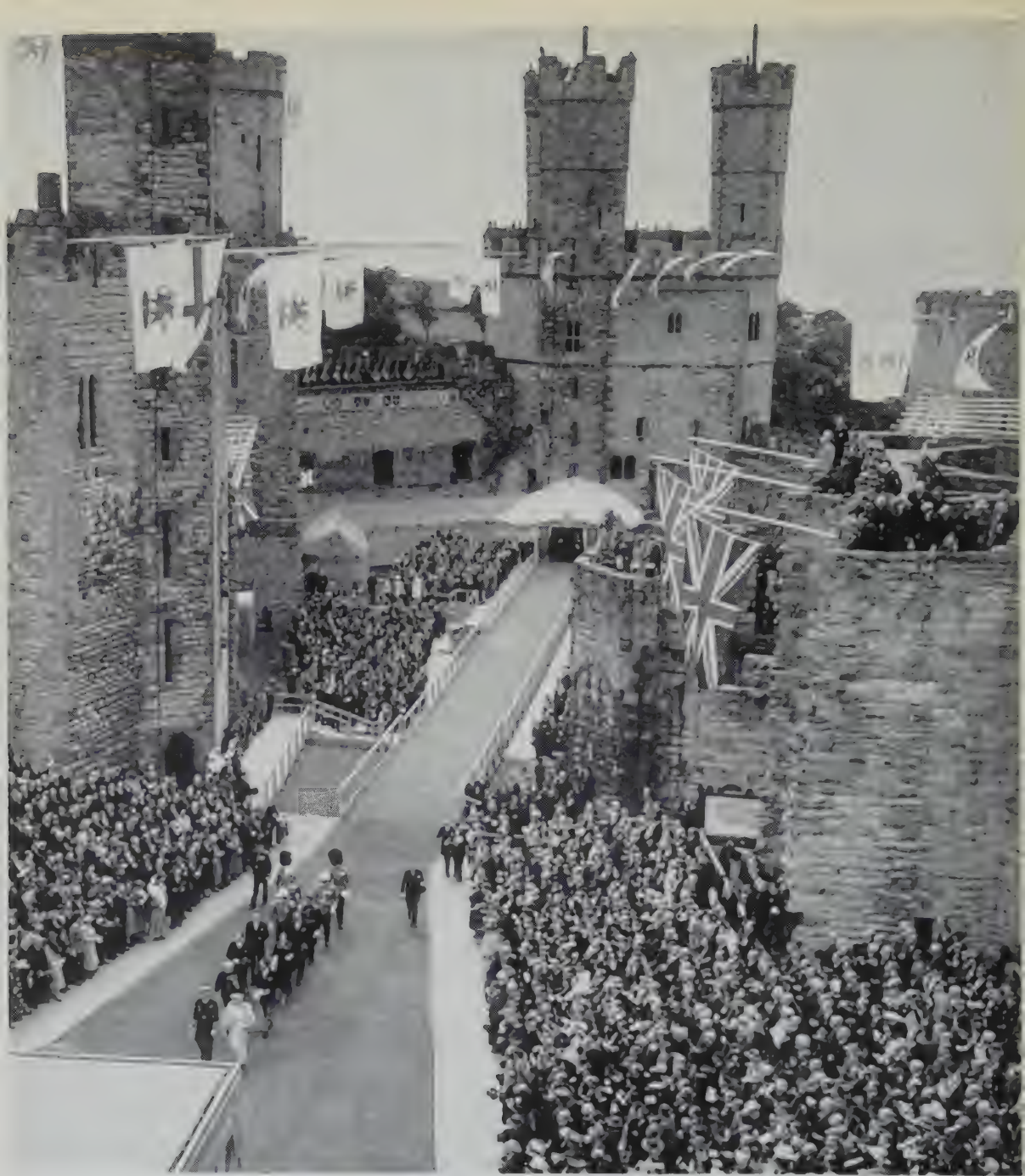
EVE-OF-CORONATION SCENE

One of the most popular vantage-points on Coronation Day was the plinth of Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square, which the procession had to pass twice. The crowd which had formed here on the previous evening seemed to be in high spirits during its long night vigil.



DEMONSTRATION OF LOYALTY

For weeks before the Coronation streets throughout London vied with one another in efforts to create resplendent decorations. The inhabitants of Wyke Street, Old Ford, were characteristic of the many happy groups which were photographed during the celebrations.



WALES PAYS HOMAGE

The months following the Coronation were busy ones for the King and Queen. In July they visited Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In Wales they were received by Mr. Lloyd George at Caernarvon Castle, and they are here seen heading a procession through the Inner Bailey. In 1284, in this historic Castle, Edward I, having annexed Wales to the British Crown, presented his newly born son to the Welsh people as the first Prince of Wales.



CEREMONY OF THE GARTER

The annual ceremony of Britain's oldest Order of Chivalry—the Most Noble Order of the Garter—is held at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, on or about St. George's Day. The King (who had been a member of the Order since 1916) is here seen with the Queen leaving St. George's Chapel, Windsor, after attending his first ceremony, in 1937, as Sovereign of the Order. The insignia includes the Garter, the Star, the Lesser George and the Collar.



THE KING AND YOUTH

King George VI's interest in youth organizations has been referred to earlier in this book. In 1919 he became president of the Boys' Welfare Society, and in 1921 supervised the arrangements for the opening of a boys' camp at Southwold, Suffolk. The Southwold camp, which brought together four hundred public-school and working-class boys in equal numbers, was from the first a great success. As Duke of York he spent an informal day at the camp each year (except in 1934, when illness precluded a visit), joining in the sport, rags, banter and singing, and his visits continued after his accession. Scenes from the Southwold Camp are shown opposite. The King's interest in the Boy Scout Movement was evidenced when in 1938 with the Queen he inspected one thousand Boy Scouts at Windsor Castle (*below*).





AT THE GLASGOW EXHIBITION

On 3 May, 1938, the King opened the Empire Exhibition at Bellahouston Park, Glasgow, at which he is seen (*above*) on his arrival with the Queen. This was the biggest exhibition to be held in Britain since the Wembley Exhibition of 1924. The exhibits in over one hundred buildings represented all aspects of life in Britain and the Empire. Each of the self-governing Dominions, together with India, Ceylon, Burma and Malaya, had a separate pavilion. The pavilion representing Britain was divided into four sections, exhibiting "Fitter Britain" and the industries of steel, coal-mining and shipbuilding. Scotland had two pavilions and a model of a Scottish Highland village, through which the King and Queen are seen passing (*left*). In six months twelve million people visited the exhibition.



KING AND QUEEN WATCH A SPINNING DEMONSTRATION

The Queen's Scottish blood and domestic bent of mind drew her to one of the smaller exhibits of the Empire Exhibition. She is here seen with the King following closely a demonstration of the spinning-wheel by a woman from the island of Barra in the Hebrides.

STATE VISIT TO FRANCE

On 19 July, 1938, King George and Queen Elizabeth left England for a four-day State visit to France—the first to France since his father's visit in 1914. At the Bois de Boulogne station the Royal visitors were met by M. Lebrun, the French President, and Mme Lebrun.





ROYAL PROCESSION IN PARIS

Great crowds of Parisians thronged the length of the Champs-Élysées (*above*) and the remainder of the four-mile route as the State procession, with an escort of cavalry, bearing the Royal visitors and the President and Mme Lebrun made its way to the Quai d'Orsay.



SCENES DURING THE KING'S

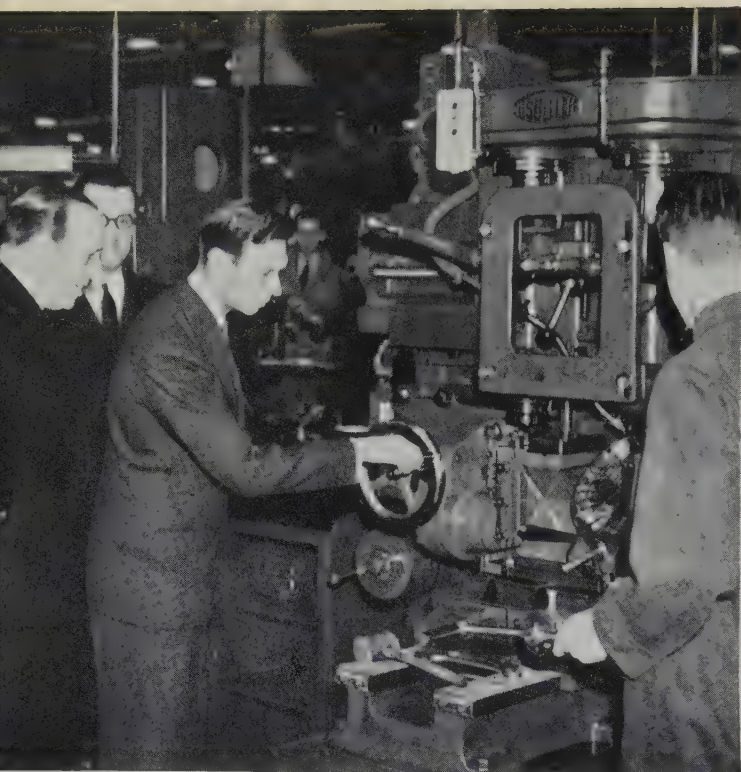
Engagements had been arranged for each day of the King's visit. On the evening of 19 July they attended a banquet in the Élysée Palace, at which the King spoke of "the ardent desire of our governments to find, by means of international agreements, a solution of those political problems which threaten the peace of the world." On 20 July the King laid a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior at the Arc de Triomphe. On the afternoon of the same day Their Majesties were given a reception at the Hôtel de Ville (in the picture above they are seen arriving). The next day, with President Lebrun, he reviewed a parade of fifty thousand French



STATE VISIT TO FRANCE

troops at Versailles and took the salute (*above, right*); Lord Halifax, the then British Foreign Secretary, appears on the left of the picture. (*Bottom, right*) His Majesty shakes hands with General Billotte, the Military Governor of Paris. On 22 July the King unveiled a war memorial at Villers-Bretonneux to the Australians who had fallen in France during the First World War, and who had no known graves. A scene during this ceremony is shown in the photograph (*bottom, left*). On the evening of 22 July Their Majesties arrived back in London. President and Mme Lebrun were to make a return visit as the guests of Their Majesties in the spring of 1939.





AT "SHADOW" FACTORIES

By the early months of 1938 many firms not normally concerned with the manufacture of instruments of war had built and equipped "shadow" factories for supplying the armed forces with weapons—an indication of the increasing gravity of the international situation. In March, 1938, the King made a tour of aircraft shadow factories, and is here seen visiting two of them: (*left*) he inspects machinery at an aero-engine factory at Coventry; (*below*) he has an amusing ride in a car made for King Edward VII (when Prince of Wales) at Coventry.





KING VISITS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

By the year 1938 the King had become deeply interested in the work of the country's hospitals. As Duke of York he had been president of a number of hospitals and had applied himself with his usual thoroughness to gaining a knowledge of their organization and special problems. The above photograph, taken in November, 1938, shows the King looking at a child suffering from pneumonia, during a visit to Queen's Hospital for Children, Hackney Road.

THE KING AND QUEEN ARRIVE IN CANADA

The visit of the King and Queen to Canada in 1939 was not only the King's first visit to a dominion since his accession, but the first visit of a reigning British sovereign to an overseas dominion. The King and Queen left London on 6 May and travelled to Portsmouth, where they boarded the liner *Empress of Australia*. Flying-boats of the R.A.F. flew over the liner as she went down Channel escorted by H.M. battleship *Repulse* and other ships. After some delay due to bad weather the liner berthed at Quebec on 17 May, where great crowds gathered on Dufferin Terrace to greet Their Majesties as the liner drew in to the quay.





WELCOME FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

The royal liner berthed at Wolfe's Cove, where Mr. Mackenzie King, the Canadian Prime Minister, and Mr. Ernest Lapointe, the Attorney-General, went aboard to welcome Their Majesties. Later Mr. Mackenzie King was waiting at the bottom of the gangway as the Sovereign, in naval uniform, stepped for the first time on to Canadian soil. Later, the Canadian Premier made a formal speech of welcome in the presence of the whole of the Privy Council of Canada, assembled for the first time in the presence of the King. The King replied both in English and French in recognition of Quebec's French-Canadian history.



THROUGH QUEBEC'S CROWDED STREETS

Vast crowds lined the streets as the King and Queen drove from Wolfe's Cove to Parliament House, past some of the oldest parts of the city. Among the welcoming thousands were Red Indians, who had come into the city from their reserves in their native costume, and a great gathering of schoolchildren on the historic Heights of Abraham.

CARDINAL VILLENEUVE PRESENTED

The first man to be presented to the King after the ceremony in Parliament House, Quebec, was Cardinal Villeneuve, head of the Roman Catholic Church in Canada. The King conversed with him for several minutes. The presentation of Cabinet Ministers followed.







IN MONTREAL AND OTTAWA

The enthusiastic reception at Quebec was repeated at Ottawa, Canada's capital, and Montreal, the largest city and the country's commercial centre. The Royal visitors travelled from Quebec to Montreal on 18 May. They drove to the City Hall (*opposite, top left*), where they met civic dignitaries, and later continued their drive through the city (*opposite, bottom*). At Ottawa, on 19 May, the King addressed Parliament, emphasizing the free and equal partnership of the nations of the Commonwealth "no longer expressed by the supremacy of the time-honoured Parliament that sits at Westminster." While in Ottawa the King gave the royal assent to eight bills passed by the Canadian Parliament. As he left the Houses of Parliament with the Queen and Mr. Mackenzie King he took the salute from the steps of the Peace Tower (*opposite, top right*). On 21 May, the last day in Ottawa, the King unveiled the Canadian National War Memorial in Connaught Square, which he described as a "noble memorial to Canada's spirit and sacrifice." The picture (*above*) shows a general view of the scene as the King and Queen drove away after the unveiling.



ARRIVAL IN WASHINGTON

After leaving Ottawa the King and Queen travelled west to Toronto and then on to Winnipeg. Often they stopped at wayside halts for the King to receive greetings from the small crowds collected there. The route led on through Regina, Calgary, and Banff, in the Canadian Rockies, where they had a day's well-earned rest, to Vancouver, and thence across the water to Victoria. The return journey was by way of Edmonton, Saskatoon and thence, with a stop to admire the magnificent spectacle of the Niagara Falls, across the border into the U.S.A.—the first time for a British sovereign. The King and Queen arrived at Washington on 8 June. This picture, with the Capitol in the background, shows part of the military escort which accompanied the Royal visitors on their drive to the White House.



WITH THE PRESIDENT AT HYDE PARK

The King and Queen were met at Washington Union Station by President Roosevelt and together they drove to the White House, where, in a speech of welcome, the President described the visit as standing out in high relief in the life of the nation. While in Washington the King and Queen reviewed a massed parade of scouts, attended a State banquet, and visited the tomb of George Washington and the Arlington National Memorial, where the King laid wreaths. Later they stayed with President and Mrs. Roosevelt at the President's private residence, Hyde Park. This picture shows the President, his mother and Mrs. Roosevelt and their guests relaxing on the portico of Hyde Park, above which fly the Royal Standard, the Union Jack, the Stars and Stripes and the Presidential Flag.





NEW YORK WELCOME

In New York the Royal visitors saw something of the kind of welcome which only New York can give. The special purpose of their visit was to attend the New York World's Fair. They landed at the Battery, New York, from the U.S. destroyer *Warrington*, which had brought them from Sandy Hook. Against the background of the famous Manhattan skyline, with its fantastic towering skyscrapers, they drove along the West Side Highway past some of the three and a half million people who lined the route. Their escort consisted of a score of New York's traffic policemen on motor-cycles, and detectives on the running boards of their car. Having arrived at the World's Fair, they signed the visitors' book and were then guests of the United States Commissioner-General at a luncheon in the Federal Building. Their Majesties visited the British Pavilion, where presentations were made, and in the Pavilion garden inspected a parade of locally-resident British ex-servicemen. After these exertions the King and Queen left for Hyde Park, where they were the President's guests for a day's relaxation. A visit which had proved an unqualified success came to an end when the King and Queen joined their train to return to Canada to complete their tour.



FAREWELL TO CANADA

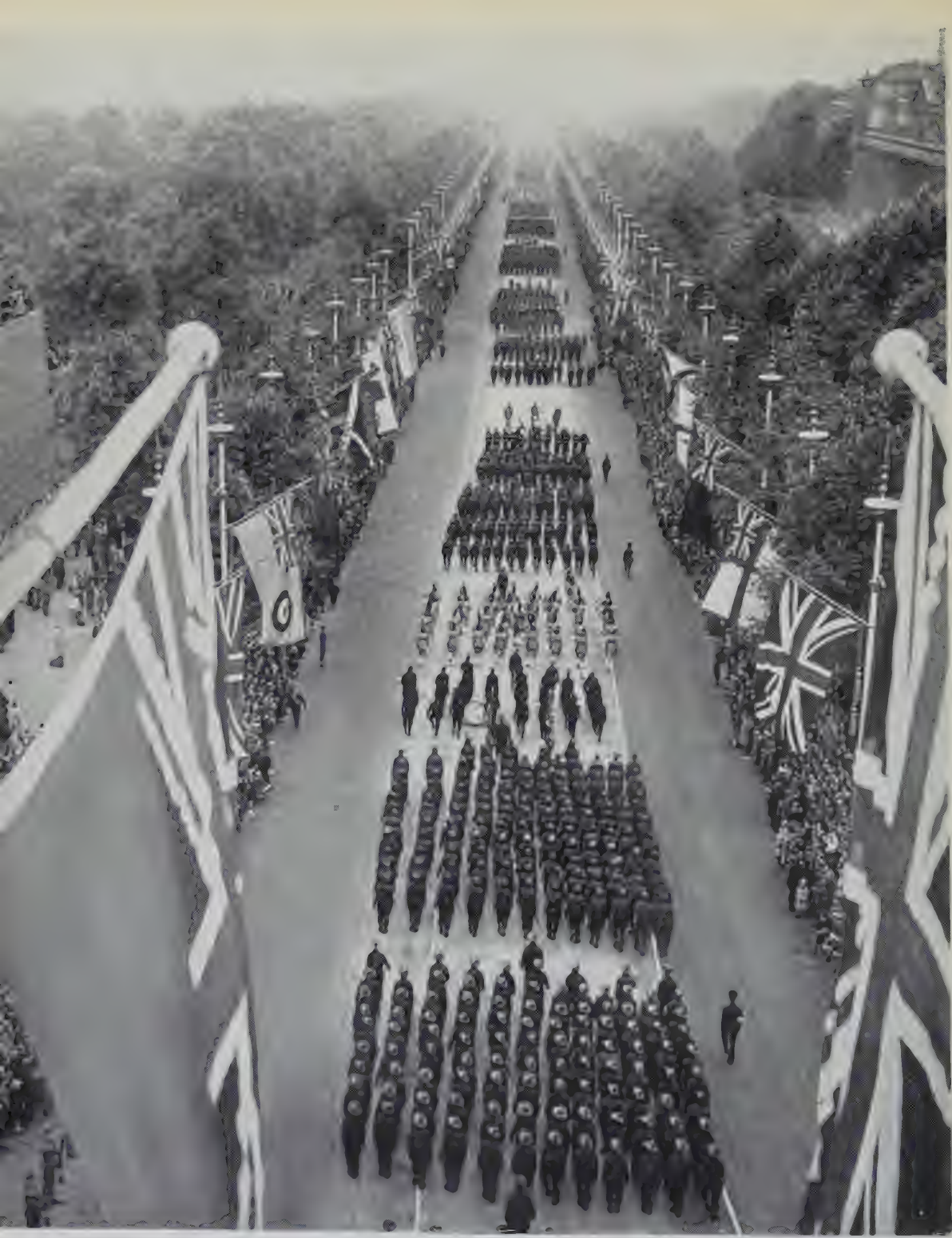
The tour of Canada was resumed in the province of New Brunswick, where the King and Queen visited Newcastle, Fredericton, the capital, and St. John. They went on to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where after a last drive along crowded streets Their Majesties boarded the *Empress of Britain*. On 15 June the King and Queen waved goodbye to the crowds on the quayside (*above*). On the way home a stop was made at Newfoundland. The return voyage was enlivened by deck-tennis (*left*).



HOME AGAIN

Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret boarded the *Empress of Britain* in the Solent to give their parents the first welcome back to Britain. Before the Royal party disembarked two page-boys presented the Princesses with giant pandas subscribed for by members of the crew of the liner (right). The King and Queen arrived back in London on the evening of 22 June. The next day they drove in State to Guildhall (below, the ceremony at Temple Bar) to a luncheon given by the City of London to celebrate their return.






VICTORY PARADE—8 JUNE, 1946

The War Years

1939-1946

t is unthinkable that we should refuse to meet the challenge. It is to this high purpose that I now call my people at home and my peoples across the seas who will make our cause their own. I ask them to stand calm, firm and united." These words, which formed part of the King's broadcast on the evening of 3 September, 1939, found a ready response in the hearts of his loyal subjects. The King proved by the conduct of his own life during the war years that he was determined to make as great a sacrifice as any of his people, to endure their privations and hardships, to set an example of unswerving loyalty to the ideal of duty.

As Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of the Realm the King inspired the work of the Navy, the Army and the Air Force. From the outbreak of war until peace had been won he was unsparing of himself in visiting his troops and in reviewing the Forces of Britain, of the Dominions and of the other countries which fought for the same cause and whose soldiers, sailors or airmen passed through Britain. He was with the troops in France, in North Africa and Italy, and in Normandy. He distributed either in the field or at special investitures held at Buckingham Palace the medals and decorations which had been won in action.

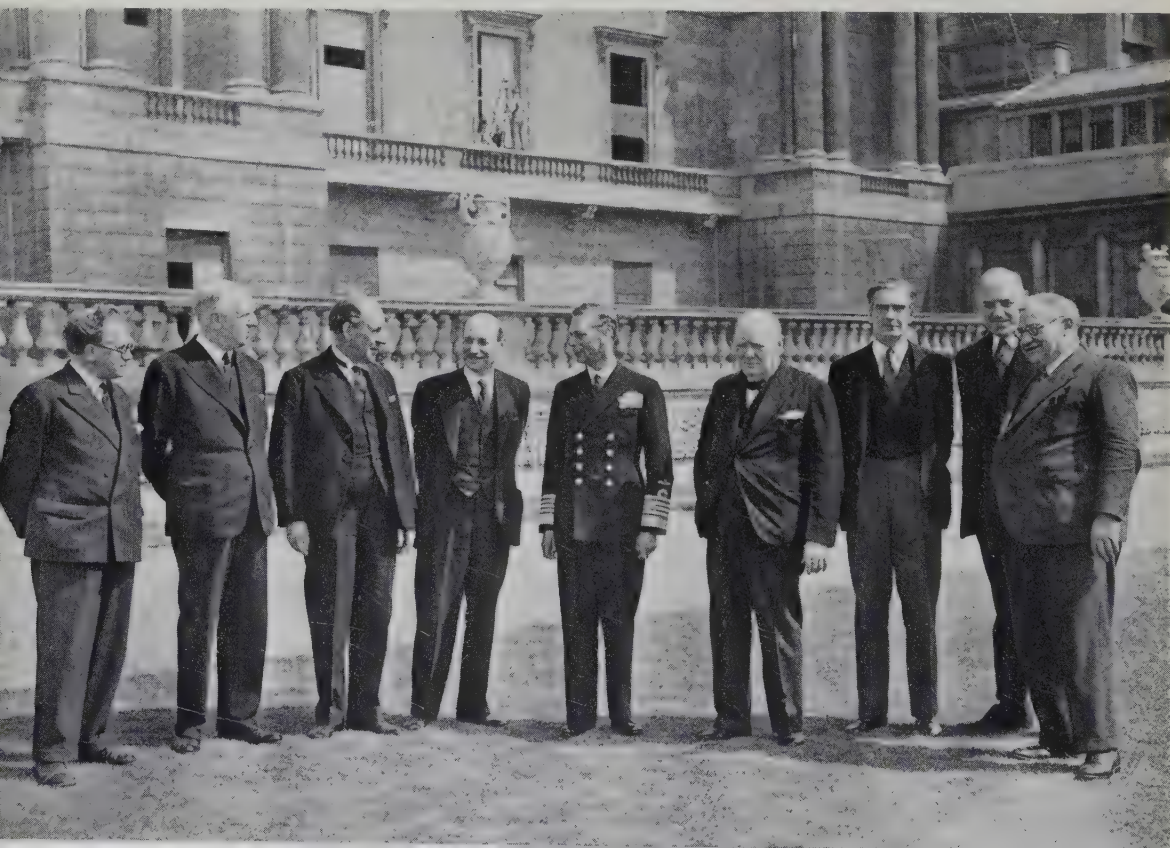
As the first citizen of Britain the King shared with his subjects the dangers of wartime London. Throughout the greater part of the aerial bombardment he remained in residence with the Queen at Buckingham Palace. He visited badly bombed areas almost as soon as the last bombs had fallen. He encouraged the Civil Defence Forces with his presence and his quiet confidence. His own home, Buckingham Palace, was bombed nine times. His sympathy with the bereaved and the homeless was as sincere as it was spontaneous.

When the King took the salute at the great Victory Parade on 8 June, 1946, all who had shared in the triumphs and tribulations of the war could feel that the King himself was one of the architects of victory which had been won so hardly over the forces of aggression. The King on that day represented truly the spirit of a people which had won through suffering and terror to final victory.



THE KING AND HIS MINISTERS

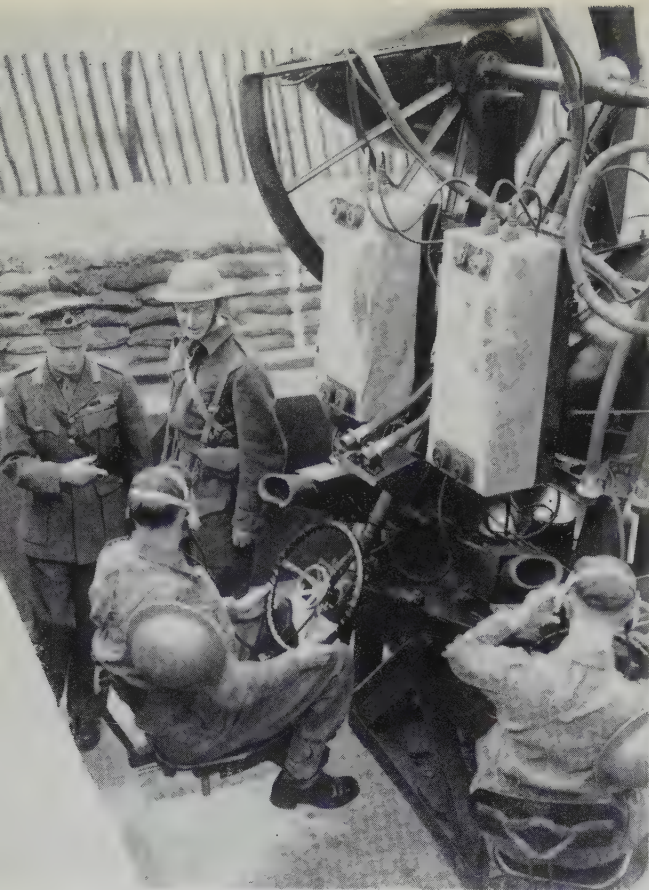
The conduct of the war was throughout marked by the very close association of the King with his ministers. Every day vast quantities of official documents were read and digested by him, and he acquainted himself with the details of every move in allied strategy and diplomacy. On 1 September, 1939, after it had been learned that Germany had invaded Poland, the King drove to No. 10 Downing Street (*left*) for a talk with the Prime Minister, Mr. Chamberlain. In 1941 he again visited No. 10 to see Mr. Churchill (*right*), who had succeeded Mr. Chamberlain in May, 1940. The picture (*below*) taken in 1944 shows the King with the War Cabinet: (*left to right*) Mr. Herbert Morrison, Lord Woolton, Sir John Anderson, Mr. C. R. Attlee, Mr. Winston Churchill, Mr. Anthony Eden, Mr. Oliver Lyttelton and Mr. Ernest Bevin.





VISITS TO TROOPS AT

Much of the King's time during the war was devoted to visits to his troops both at home and overseas. His first journey abroad was to France in December, 1939. Accompanied by the Duke of Gloucester and General Lord Gort, Commander-in-Chief, he visited units of the British Expeditionary Force and of the R.A.F. in France. He made an extensive tour of the front, and also met President Lebrun and M. Daladier, the French Prime Minister. On the French sector of the front he inspected the Maginot Line, where General Gamelin, the allied Commander-in-Chief, conducted him over some of the fortifications. The two lower photographs on these pages were taken during this tour and show the King (*left*) returning the salute of a contingent of French soldiers, and (*right*), followed by Lord



HOME AND IN FRANCE

Gort, acknowledging the cheers of men of English county regiments. The disasters which overtook the allied armies in France and Belgium in 1940 called for and brought forth a supreme effort on the part of the people of Britain—an effort with which the King closely identified himself. Amid bombing and threats of invasion the King and Queen never considered personal safety. In August, 1940, the King visited anti-aircraft units in Kent—the focus of the Battle of Britain—and is seen (*left*) talking to the detachment manning a sound locator; about the same time he inspected a unit of the Local Defence Volunteers (*right*)—later to be renamed the Home Guard—whose formation, just before the retreat to Dunkirk, was an indication of the nation's determination to resist to the last ditch.





THE KING WITH HIS FIGHTING MEN

During the critical months that followed the Dunkirk evacuation the soldierly figure of the King moved tirelessly about among his people. Militarily, Britain's position after Dunkirk could hardly have been worse. There was not one armoured division in the country, the number of rifles in stock was only seventy thousand, and the newly formed L.D.V. were armed mainly with pitchforks and shot-guns. Nevertheless the people's morale was very high, and the activities and bearing of the King played no small part in sustaining it. Among the troops which the King inspected during July, 1940, were a Maori unit (*opposite, left*), the Royal Scots Regiment (*opposite, right*), and an Australian unit (*opposite, below*). Investitures also claimed their share of the King's time; His Majesty is seen below in the courtyard at Buckingham Palace pinning the D.S.O. on Lieutenant-Commander Turner, R.N., for the part he played in the release of British prisoners from the German ship *Altmark*.



AIRCRAFT AND SHIPS

Two industries which were always at the forefront in the national struggle for survival were the aircraft and shipbuilding industries. The workers rose superbly to the challenge: the R.A.F. received planes in numbers that enabled it in the end to achieve mastery of the skies over Europe; and the Merchant Navy, though depleted, always had enough ships to keep the country fed and in fighting trim. The King's interest in these industries is evident in these pictures of visits with the Queen to an aircraft factory (left) and to a Sunderland shipyard (below).





IN THE COALFIELDS

The build-up of the British war-effort, based as it was upon the country's production of coal, made recruitment for the mines an urgent national priority. In mid-1943 exemption from armed service was offered to young men of call-up age who volunteered to work in the mines. Recruitment still lagged, however, and in December, 1943, compulsory direction by ballot was instituted. In February, 1944, the King and Queen visited part of this vital industrial front: they are seen (*above*) talking to miners and pit-boys of Hickleton Main Colliery, Yorkshire, and (*right*) inspecting the Wentworth open-cast mining site.





THE KING INSPECTS BOMB DAMAGE AT BUCKINGHAM

Throughout the heavy bombing of 1940 and 1941 the King and Queen remained with their people in London. Buckingham Palace was hit nine times during the war (the above picture shows Their Majesties examining the damage resulting from one of the hits—a delayed-action bomb). On one occasion a bomb burst in the courtyard while the King and Queen were



PALACE AND IN THE EAST END OF LONDON

standing at an open window. It was thus as sharers in a common danger that they visited those areas which were suffering most from aerial ravages. Several visits were made to the East End, which with the City took the brunt of the attack on London. The picture on this page, taken on one of these visits, shows Their Majesties beside a boarded-up bomb-crater.

AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR

Often the King and Queen would appear unannounced in some heavily bombed district within a few hours of the end of a raid. Then, informally, they would speak words of sympathy and encouragement to those who had been through the ordeal. Typical of such occasions was this one in September, 1940, at the height of the attack on London, when two little girls came out of a Bermondsey shelter to find the King waiting to greet them.





THE ROYAL FAMILY RELAXES

When his busy programme during the war years allowed the King a little leisure he would spend it with his family. One of the favourite pastimes of the King and Princesses was to gather around the piano at Royal Lodge, Windsor, while the Queen played for them.



SANDRINGHAM ESTATES HELP TO FEED THE NATION

To help in the national drive for more home-grown food, the King decided that Sandringham Park should be ploughed up and put under crops. The conversion was carried out in collaboration with the Norfolk War Agricultural Committee. This picture shows the King and Queen on a tour of inspection through Sandringham Park during harvest-time in 1943.



PRINCESS ELIZABETH IS EIGHTEEN

On 21 April, 1944, Princess Elizabeth celebrated her eighteenth birthday quietly in the country. She had now reached the age when she could govern as Queen in her own right in the event of her father's death, and from now on she began to be looked upon as the representative of the nation's youth. The small family gathering on the Princess's eighteenth birthday is seen above; back row (*left to right*): the Duke of Gloucester, the Duchess of Gloucester, Princess Margaret, the Princess Royal, the Duchess of Kent, the Earl of Harewood; front row (*left to right*): Queen Mary, the King, Princess Elizabeth and the Queen. The photograph on the right, taken soon after, shows the Queen with her daughters at Windsor Castle.







THE KING VISITS MALTA

On 20 June, 1943, the King visited Britain's island fortress in the Mediterranean—Malta, G.C. On arrival His Majesty was met by Viscount Gort, Governor of the Island. During his visit the King toured one of the most-bombed parts of the island, accompanied by the Parish Priest. The streets of Valletta, scarred by enemy bombs, were crowded as His Majesty drove through the town, and when he stepped on to the balcony of the palace (*above*) the dense crowd of people which had gathered (*left*) broke into prolonged cheering. The King's visit to Malta concluded his strenuous twelve-day tour of the Allied North African Armies.



THE KING KNIGHTS GENERAL MONTGOMERY

On 12 June, 1943, the King left Britain by air for a tour of the armies in North Africa, then in the first flush of victory over the Axis. From Algiers, where he landed, he went on to Oran, Tunis and Tripoli. In a few crowded days he toured the Tunisian battlefields, visited the British First and Eighth Armies and the American Fifth Army, held a review of naval personnel and saw the preparations for the invasion of Sicily. During the tour the King conferred a knighthood on General Montgomery (*left*).

HOSPITAL IN TRIPOLI

The King's visit to his troops was marked by an easy informality. To the fighting men he represented not merely the Supreme Commander to whom they owed allegiance, but a personal link with the families and homes from which many of them had long been separated. For his part the King felt himself to be "the bearer of the congratulations of all the people of the Empire on a victory which will shine in military history." (*Right*) The King chats to a patient in a hospital for British troops in Tripoli.



VISIT TO THE K.R.R.

Throughout the North African tour the King was at pains to see and be seen by as many of his troops as possible, and is seen (*left*) shaking hands with the Colonel commanding the 1st Battalion King's Royal Rifles. His Majesty also visited South African, Australian, New Zealand and Indian units, and inspected troops from Basutoland, Swaziland and Ceylon.





A VISIT TO GENERAL EISENHOWER'S HEADQUARTERS

In 1944 the King was again abroad with his armies. On 16 June he crossed the Channel in the cruiser *Arethusa* to make a brief tour of inspection of the Normandy bridgehead. In October he again visited 21 Army Group, which by then had advanced through northern France into Belgium and Holland, and went to see General Eisenhower at Supreme Headquarters.



INSPECTION OF NAVAL UNITS AT NAPLES

On 22 July His Majesty flew to Naples for a nine-day tour of the Italian battle-front. On 24 July, accompanied by Admiral Sir John Cunningham, C.-in-C. Mediterranean Fleet, in a launch flying the Royal Standard, he inspected allied naval units in Naples Bay.

THE KING IN ITALY

From Naples the King flew to General Alexander's camp and in the ensuing days covered many hundreds of miles by air and road. His journeys by road were made in an open car so that the men could see him, and he made it his business to talk with as many commanders and men as time permitted. On 30 July His Majesty visited 5 Corps and had tea in the ruins of Hadrian's Villa, which he is seen leaving accompanied by some of the Corps' officers.





VE-DAY

On 8 May, 1945, Germany formally surrendered to the Allies, and great crowds gathered outside Buckingham Palace to cheer and clamour for a sight of the King—the focal point of the Commonwealth's triumphs over difficulties which at times had seemed insuperable. During the day and well into the evening the King and Queen came out on to the balcony of the Palace and acknowledged the warm greetings of their people. Everyone was particularly delighted when Mr. Winston Churchill joined Their Majesties and the Princesses (*above*). A large crowd of cheerful people gathered at the foot of Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square to listen to the King's broadcast in the evening (*opposite*). In his broadcast the King gave thanks to God for "a great deliverance," and referred to the faith and unity which Britain had kept with her Allies; he went on: "That faith, that unity, have carried us to victory through dangers which at times seemed overwhelming . . . the Queen and I know the ordeals which you have endured . . . we are proud to have shared some of these ordeals. . . . We shall have failed and the blood of our dearest will have flowed in vain if the victory which they died to win does not lead to a lasting peace, founded on justice and goodwill. To that, then, let us turn our thoughts on this day of just triumph and proud sorrow. . . ."





SOUTH LONDON TOUR

On 10 May, 1945, the King and Queen made a victory tour of South London. The crowds which had assembled along the route to greet Their Majesties became so dense at Lewisham Market (*left*) that the royal car was brought practically to a standstill.

WITH THE CHILDREN

Their Majesties' Victory tour through South London took them through Deptford, Lewisham, Streatham and Greenwich. At one point in their journey they left their car to chat to a group of school-children (*right*).



VE-DAY SCENE

The excitement and happiness prevailing on 8 May, 1945, brought these servicemen and civilians together in an unrehearsed but vigorous song-and-dance group. This scene in London was typical of many others throughout the cities and towns of Britain and the Commonwealth.



VJ-DAY

Following the unconditional surrender of Japan, 15 and 16 August, 1945, were observed as national holidays in Britain. On the morning of the 15th the King and Queen drove in State from Buckingham Palace to open the first session of the new Parliament and received a great ovation from the crowds. In the evening the King broadcast to his peoples.

ANCIENT CEREMONY OF THE TYNWALD

On 4 July, 1945, the King and Queen arrived in the Isle of Man on a two-day visit. On 5 July the King presided over the annual meeting of the Tynwald (the one-thousand-year-old Manx Parliament), held on Tynwald Hill, to promulgate the laws passed during the previous year. After the Acts had been enumerated by the Deemster, the King formally assented to them in the nearby St. George's Chapel (which is used as a parliamentary chamber) and addressed the members of the Legislature. A scene during the ceremony is shown below.





WITH PRESIDENT TRUMAN ON "RENOWN"

On 2 August, 1945, the King went to Plymouth to meet President Truman, who was returning to the United States from the Potsdam Conference in the cruiser *Augusta*. The King entertained the President to lunch aboard the battle-cruiser *Renown*, on the deck of which they are seen walking together, and then returned the President's visit by going aboard the *Augusta*.



V-DAY PARADE: FIELD-MARSHAL

Ten months after the end of the Second World War, on 8 June, 1946, a great victory parade was held in London. Twenty-one thousand troops and civilians took part in the parade—the largest ever held in Britain—and represented every part of the Commonwealth and all the Allies except Russia, Poland and Yugoslavia (which countries had declined the invitation to send contingents). The parade was in three parts: a mechanized column, a marching column



MONTGOMERY SALUTING THE KING

and a fly-past. The King took the salute in the Mall, and amongst those with him on the saluting-base were the Queen, Queen Mary, the Princesses, Crown Prince Olav of Norway, Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, King Feisal of Iraq, Prince Felix of Luxembourg, Mr. Attlee, Mr. Churchill, Mr. Mackenzie King, Field-Marshal Smuts and Service Chiefs. In this picture Field-Marshal Montgomery is passing the saluting base.



BIRTH OF A PRINCESS

On 15 August, 1950, a daughter was born to Princess Elizabeth at Clarence House, London. The child, who was now third in the line of succession to the Throne, after her mother and Prince Charles, was christened Anne Elizabeth Alice Louise at the ceremony in October.

The Last Years

1946-1952



There was the feeling of impending social change in the period which followed the end of the war. The King by his wise counsel and dignified bearing contributed in no small measure to the peaceful solution of the problems that beset the country. A Labour Government was in office. Many of its members were well known to the King because of their years of service in the wartime Coalition Government. New members were graciously received and quickly taken into his confidence.

Early in 1947 the King resumed the series of royal tours which had been interrupted by the outbreak of war. Accompanied by the Queen and the two Princesses, he was in the Union of South Africa and other British African territories for several months. When the Royal Party returned to Britain in May the King, worn beyond endurance, resumed without a break the onerous responsibility of a sovereign's work at home. In the autumn of the same year the nation shared with the King his pleasure in the marriage of his daughter, Princess Elizabeth. The following April the King and Queen celebrated their Silver Wedding anniversary.

All this time the strain of royal service was undermining the King's health. In November, 1948, came the first news of his illness, and in March the nation learned that an operation was necessary to improve his blood circulation. The King made a partial recovery and he was present at the opening of the new House of Commons and at the ceremony to mark the opening of the Festival of Britain. When illness finally overcame him and he underwent a grave operation in September, 1951, there were few who dared hope for his complete recovery. Once more he proved his iron determination. By Christmas he was convalescent. When his daughter and her husband left for the long-postponed tour of Australia and New Zealand he was at the airport in the biting wind to speed them on their way. On the very day before his death he was, as he would have wished, out shooting with his friends in his beloved Norfolk.

The King died in his sleep early in the morning of 6 February. The very suddenness of his passing intensified the deep personal sense of loss which filled the hearts of millions of his loyal subjects and friends in every corner of the world.



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY, 10 NOVEMBER, 1946

In June, 1946, the Prime Minister announced in the House of Commons that the National Day of Remembrance would be observed in future on the Sunday preceding 11 November, unless 11 or 12 November fell on a Sunday. To the dates "1914-1918," inscribed on the Cenotaph, Whitehall, a plaque was added with the years "1939-1945," and the King carried out the unveiling ceremony (*above*) on Remembrance Day, 1946.



H.M.S. "VANGUARD" ARRIVES AT CAPE TOWN

The King and Queen, accompanied by the Princesses, left Portsmouth for South Africa on 1 February, 1947, in the battleship *Vanguard*. This was the King's first post-war visit to a Commonwealth country and the first visit by a British Sovereign to South Africa. The *Vanguard* arrived at Table Bay, Cape Town (*above*), on 17 February, and the Royal Family were warmly welcomed by all sections of the population—white, black and coloured.



SOUTH AFRICAN PARLIAMENT OPENED IN STATE

On 19 February the King and the Royal Family visited Simonstown, a large naval base and headquarters of South Atlantic Command, and on 20 February they visited Paarl and Stellenbosch, in the "vineyard" area of Cape Province. The Royal Family returned to Cape Town on 20 February, when His Majesty opened in State the new session of the Union Parliament; he is seen above with the Queen leaving Parliament House after the ceremony.

THE KING AT LADYSMITH

After leaving Cape Province the King journeyed through the Orange Free State and the High Commission territory of Basutoland. On 13 March he re-entered the Orange Free State, and the same day crossed into Natal and visited Ladysmith, where he signed the distinguished visitors' book (*right*). At every point of their journey and all along the route the Royal Family received a warm ovation from all sections of the population.



OSTRICH FARM AT OUDTSHOORN

Among the many places visited by the Royal Family during their journey across the Great Karoo was Oudtshoorn, a centre of the ostrich-farming industry. At one of the farms in the area, at Leroux, they were shown a baby ostrich (*left*).

SNAKE FARM AT PORT ELIZABETH

During their visit to Port Elizabeth on 26 and 27 February the Royal Family saw the model bungalow suburb of New Brighton (which houses thirty thousand Bantus). They also made a journey to the famous snake-park, where they saw a snake-keeper, Will Johannes (*right*), handling his poisonous charges.





IN SWAZILAND AND RHODESIA

While in Natal the King visited Zululand and received a triple *Bayete* from one hundred thousand Zulus who had gathered to greet him. On 25 March the Royal Family entered the High Commission territory of Swaziland, being met at the border by Sir Evelyn Baring and the Paramount Chief of the Swazis. A great gathering of Swazis at Goedgegun (*above*) paid homage to the King. During their ensuing tour of the Transvaal the King, Queen and Princesses went down a gold-mine in Johannesburg. On 7 April the Royal Family flew to Southern Rhodesia; the King is seen (*left*) at the grave of Cecil Rhodes (the pioneer after whom the Rhodesias are named). On 24 April the Royal Party re-embarked on the *Vanguard* and arrived back in Britain on 11 May.

MARRIAGE OF A PRINCESS

On 20 November, 1947, Princess Elizabeth was married to the Duke of Edinburgh in Westminster Abbey. The King and Princess Elizabeth arrived at the West Door of the Abbey, where they were met by the Dean and Chapter. The Princess's train was carried by Prince William of Gloucester and Prince Michael of Kent, and her cortège of eight bridesmaids was headed by Princess Margaret and Princess Alexandra of Kent (*right*). The Abbey clergy preceded the bride's procession into the sacristy, where the Princess and her father took their places beside Prince Philip and his best man (*below*), who were waiting at the altar steps.





PRINCESS ELIZABETH AND PRINCE PHILIP RETURN

Princess Elizabeth with the King had driven to Westminster Abbey from Buckingham Palace in the Irish State Coach via the Mall, Admiralty Arch, Whitehall and Parliament Square; she returned from the Abbey with her husband along the same route in the famous Glass Coach (seen above approaching the Palace from the Mall), followed by the King and



TO BUCKINGHAM PALACE FROM THE ABBEY

Queen, Queen Mary and other royal guests. Tens of thousands of people, many of whom had waited all night, thronged the processional route. Later the newly-wed couple left to spend their honeymoon at Broadlands (the residence, near Romsey, Hampshire, of Earl Mountbatten of Burma), and at Birkhall, near Balmoral.



UNVEILING OF THE MEMORIAL TO PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

The unveiling in Grosvenor Square, London, on 12 April, 1948, of the memorial statue of President Roosevelt by Mrs. Roosevelt, who was accompanied by the King, marked in permanent form the friendship which the great President of the United States showed Britain during the war years, and recalled the words used by the King, and quoted on an earlier page, on his visit to Washington in 1939. After the unveiling the King laid a wreath on the memorial.



SILVER WEDDING OF THE KING AND QUEEN

King George and Queen Elizabeth celebrated their Silver Wedding anniversary on 26 April, 1948. In celebration they attended a thanksgiving service at St. Paul's Cathedral, where an address was given by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The King and Queen drove to and from the Cathedral through crowded streets in an open carriage, with a Sovereign's escort of cavalry, being met by the Lord Mayor with traditional ceremony at Temple Bar.



OPENING OF THE NEW HOUSE OF COMMONS

The rebuilt House of Commons, which had been destroyed by a German bomb in May, 1941, since when the Members of Parliament had met in the House of Lords, was completed in 1950 and was opened on 26 October in the presence of the Speakers or presiding officers of twenty-nine legislatures of the British Commonwealth. In accordance with the traditional usages of the House of Commons, the King was not present in the actual chamber. After the formal opening he attended Westminster Hall, where, in the presence of members of both Houses of Parliament, he received addresses presented by the Lord Chancellor and the Speaker. The King described the new chamber "as a sign to the world of our faith in freedom."



THE FESTIVAL OF BRITAIN

The Festival of Britain, which was opened on 3 May, 1951, by the King in a speech from the steps of St. Paul's Cathedral following a service of dedication, commemorated the centenary of the Great Exhibition of 1851, which was opened by the King's great-grandmother, Queen Victoria, and which owed its inception to the interest of the Prince Consort. This picture shows the King and Queen, followed by members of the Royal Family, entering St. Paul's for the service and preceded by the Lord Mayor of London. In the evening of the same day the King and Queen attended the opening concert in the Royal Festival Hall. The following morning the King visited the South Bank Exhibition in London.



THE KING WITH HIS FAMILY

The King's interest in family life and children was widely recognized and he made frequent references to them in his speeches and broadcasts. This interest is particularly recalled by the pictures on these pages. Balmoral in August was the scene of the gathering above. Prince Charles, sitting astride a sculptured deer, is the centre of attraction, while Princess Anne is asleep in the baby-carriage held by the King. A month after this picture was taken the King underwent a lung operation at Buckingham Palace. After days of anxiety it appeared that His Majesty was making a good recovery, and the picture opposite, taken in November with Prince Charles when Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh were visiting Canada, gave some reassurance. The King made his last broadcast on Christmas Day, 1951. The King's Christmas Day broadcast had been an annual feature which had brought the King's personality intimately into homes throughout the Commonwealth. It had been widely appreciated for its sincerity and thoughtfulness. Normally the King had made the broadcast direct, but on this last occasion he accepted advice to record it in advance to reduce the strain on his voice. The King spoke of the support and sympathy which he had received from the peoples of the Commonwealth during his illness and of his disappointment that for the second time he had been compelled to give up his proposed tour [of Australia]. He went on to speak of the friendliness and comradeship of the "diverse family of the British Commonwealth of Nations" and ended with a special word about those absent from their families at home and particularly the forces in Malaya and Korea.





ROYAL FAMILY AT DRURY LANE

On 28 January, 1952, the King and Queen returned to London from Sandringham, where they had spent Christmas amidst the largest family gathering since the war. On the eve of the departure of Princess Elizabeth and her husband for their State visit to Australia the Royal Family visited the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, for a performance of *South Pacific*.

THE KING WAVES FAREWELL
TO HIS DAUGHTER

On the last day of January, 1952, Princess Elizabeth and her husband left London Airport for East Africa on the first stage of their journey to Australia. They are seen (*right*) after boarding the air-liner. The King, who was to have made the tour himself before illness supervened, was at the airport with the Queen and Princess Margaret to wave them farewell (*below*). Though looking pale and tired the King stood bareheaded in a biting wind as the aircraft took off. This was the last formal occasion on which he was seen in public. On the following day, with the Queen and Princess Margaret, he returned to Sandringham, where he spent a few days shooting with his friends.





A FLAG FLIES AT HALF-MAST OVER SANDRINGHAM CHURCH

King George VI passed peacefully away in his sleep at Sandringham in the early hours of the morning of 6 February, 1952. The news was received by the people of Britain with great sorrow, which was also expressed in the messages of sympathy received by the Royal Family during the day from all parts of the Commonwealth and of the rest of the world.

Death of the King: The Ideal of Kingship

By ARTHUR BRYANT



during the reign of His Majesty King George VI the ideals and functions of kingship which had grown up in Britain since Queen Victoria's accession were tested in fires of adversity. Through the soundness of those ideals and the grandeur, the more moving because of its simplicity, of the character of the man who sat on the throne, that new conception of kingship was triumphantly vindicated. The King possessed no power to impose his will; he had no will but to do his people's will. The King possessed only responsibility, and that responsibility was infinite and unceasing. It was to represent in all he said and did the ideals which his peoples, in this country and overseas, of all classes, creeds and ranks, were agreed in honouring: selflessness, tenderness in private and dignity in public, courage, fortitude, fidelity and unswerving devotion to duty. It was to bring, in Burke's words, the dispositions that are lovely in private life into the service and conduct of the Commonwealth, and to make them the ultimate touchstone of all public action. It was to lay aside all self and to be that and only that which the people would have their King be. In being so he became, as no leader in the political arena could ever be, the unchanging symbol of national faith and unity, the common denominator of the entire Commonwealth; the father of his people. His sovereign supremacy was not political. It was something far higher: it was moral.

Every one of his subjects knows how that unique trust was fulfilled; how nobly that conception of sovereignty was exercised. During King George's reign Britain and her Commonwealth were subjected to such shocks as she had seldom or never before known in her history: her capital bombarded, her skies violated, her shores threatened with invasion; her accumulated wealth and very livelihood given freely on the altar of mankind's liberty; her Empire faced with disintegration; her ancient ways of life subjected to vast and revolutionary change.

Through all these trials and seeming calamities the people of Britain were presented with the same calm, reassuring and steadying example: the King and his family, living in the eyes of all as all would have them live: sharing their dangers and trials with dignity, courage and tranquillity, showing faith in God and the future of their country, and doing, in all changes and adversities, with the same unfailing integrity, their duty. That service of fortitude and example was rendered not only to the peoples of Britain and of the Commonwealth but to the whole world. In that service King George died, as he lived, the unchanged, unchanging symbol of a great and invincible people.



THE GUNS SALUTE IN HYDE PARK

On 7 February at noon salutes for the King's death were fired by guns of the ships of the Royal Navy throughout the world. A salute of fifty-six rounds, one round for each year of the King's life, was also fired at minute intervals between rounds, by the Honourable Artillery Company at the Tower of London, and by the King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery, in Hyde Park. In Korea Commonwealth troops, part of the United Nations forces fighting there, fired a salute using live ammunition.



THE QUEEN RETURNS FROM AFRICA

News of the death of King George VI reached the Queen in Kenya, where with the Duke of Edinburgh she was on the first stage of the Royal Tour to Australia and New Zealand. Accompanied by the Duke she flew back to England, landing at London Airport at 4.30 in the afternoon of 7 February. She was met by the Duke of Gloucester before alighting and is here seen leaving the plane, while Mr. Churchill and other Privy Councillors are waiting to greet her as she steps on to English soil for the first time as Queen.



THE NEW SOVEREIGN IS PROCLAIMED

In accordance with ancient tradition the colourful ceremony of proclaiming the accession of Queen Elizabeth II was carried out on 8 February in London. The proclamation was read at St. James's Palace by Garter King of Arms, at Charing Cross by Lancaster Herald, at Temple Bar by Norroy and Ulster King of Arms, and at the Royal Exchange by Clarenceux King of Arms. The scene below was photographed at the Royal Exchange during the proclamation and shows the City's flags raised from half-mast to salute the new Sovereign. Norroy and Ulster King of Arms (*left*) is reading the proclamation at Temple Bar to the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs. Royal salutes were fired by all naval and military establishments at home and overseas.





THE KING LIES IN HIS CHURCH

The King lay in State in Sandringham Church during 9 and 10 February, watched over by workers on the Royal Estate. The coffin was draped with the Royal Standard, on which was placed the Queen Mother's wreath. A wreath from the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh was at the head of the coffin and one from Princess Margaret at the foot.



THE KING'S LAST JOURNEY TO LONDON

Monday, 11 February, was the day chosen for the last journey of the King from Sandringham to the Palace of Westminster. The coffin, borne on a gun-carriage and covered with the scarlet and gold of the Royal Standard, was taken to Wolferton to be entrained for London. The route to the station was lined with hundreds of the royal tenants and people from the countryside for miles around. From King's Cross station the coffin was carried on a gun-carriage drawn by the King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery, in procession through London for the lying in State at Westminster Hall. The Duke of Gloucester and the Duke of Edinburgh followed on foot and hundreds of thousands of Londoners stood in silent homage.





THREE QUEENS AWAIT THE COFFIN AT WESTMINSTER HALL

Queen Elizabeth II, Queen Elizabeth (the Queen Mother) and Queen Mary awaited the arrival of the coffin for the lying in State at Westminster Hall. The Queen and the Queen Mother had travelled from King's Cross to Westminster, where they were joined by Queen Mary. A short service was held when the coffin had been placed on the catafalque.





THE LYING IN STATE

Mounted on a catafalque four feet high and covered by the Royal Standard, on which was placed the Imperial State Crown, with the Orb and Sceptre, the King's coffin was guarded day and night by four officers of the Household Troops, four members of the Yeomen of the Guard and two of the King's Gentlemen-at-Arms. Throughout Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday people of every walk of life, including many from overseas, paid their last tribute to the Sovereign as they filed through Westminster Hall. Queues of mourners waiting their turn were at times three miles long, and the Hall, which was opened each day at eight o'clock, was kept open until the small hours of the following morning. Between five and six thousand people passed through each hour, more than three hundred thousand in all during the three days of the lying in State.

The Funeral Procession



he opening section of the funeral procession, down to the first division of Sovereign's Escort, consisted principally of representatives of the Armed Forces. Preceded by an officer of the Royal Engineers and the bands of the R.A.F. and the Welsh Guards came a detachment of the R.A.F. Then followed Commonwealth detachments, detachments of the four Territorial Army units of which the King was Colonel-in-Chief or Honorary Colonel, and detachments of the Regular Army of which he was Captain-General or Colonel-in-Chief; detachments of the Royal Engineers, Royal Artillery, Royal Armoured Corps, the Royal Marines and the Royal Navy. These were followed by officers of foreign forces, Liaison Officers of the Armed Services of the Commonwealth, and Service Chaplains.

Then came representatives of the higher command of the Armed Services in ascending order of seniority. After representatives of the Air Ministry were Air Officers Commanding-in-Chief, Marshals of the R.A.F. (Lord Douglas, Viscount Portal of Hungerford, Lord Newall and Lord Tedder) and members of the Air Council. The Army representation included the Colonels Commandant, Colonels and Honorary Colonels of the King's Regiments and Corps, six General Officers Commanding or Commanding-in-Chief, three Field-Marsals (Viscount Alanbrooke, Lord Ironside and Viscount Montgomery of Alamein) and members of the Army Council, including Field-Marshal Sir William Slim, Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

Following officers of the Merchant Navy came the Royal Naval representatives led by Captains, R.N.V.R. and R.N.R. Then came Admiralty Headquarters Staff and Flag Officers, Commanders-in-Chief, Royal Navy, and Admirals of the Fleet (Lord Tovey, the Earl of Cork and Orrery, Lord Chatfield and Sir Charles M. Forbes). The Naval representatives ended with the Board of Admiralty, including the First Lord (the Rt. Hon. J. P. L. Thomas, M.P.) and the First Sea Lord (Admiral Sir Rhoderick McGrigor).

At appropriate positions between the leading detachments came the bands of the Irish Guards, the Coldstream Guards, the Royal Artillery and the Royal Marines.

The King's personal officers and servants included his Aides-de-Camp, his former and present Private Secretaries, the Keeper of the King's Privy Purse, the Master of the Horse (the Duke of Beaufort), the Lord Steward (the Duke of Hamilton and Brandon), the Palace Steward, the King's Police Officer and his valets.

The procession continued in this order:

First Division of Sovereign's Escort, Household Cavalry

Band of Scots Guards

Massed Pipers: Royal Irish Fusiliers, Royal Scots Fusiliers, Royal Scots, Irish Guards, Scots Guards

Brigade Major Brigade of Guards

*G.O.C. London District and
the Household Brigade*

Aide-de-Camp to G.O.C., London

The Earl Marshal, the Duke of Norfolk

*Lieutenant of the Royal
Company of Archers (Silver
Stick for Scotland),
the Duke of Buccleuch*

*Captain of the Gentlemen-
at-Arms, Colonel the Earl
Fortescue*

*Captain of the Yeomen of the
Guard, the Earl of Onslow*

*Rear-Admiral of the United Kingdom,
Admiral Sir Percy Noble*

*Vice-Admiral of the United Kingdom,
Admiral Sir Martin Dunbar-Nasmith*

*Vice-Chamberlain of the Household,
Henry Studholme, M.P.*

*Treasurer of the Household,
Cedric Drewe, M.P.*

*Comptroller of the Household,
Roger Conant, M.P.*

THE ROUTE OF THE FUNERAL PROCESSION OF KING GEORGE VI

FEBRUARY 15th
1952



| | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| | <i>Extra Equerries to the King:</i> | <i>Bearer Party King's Company, Grenadier Guards</i> | <i>Naval Gun Crew</i> | <i>Bearer Party King's Company, Grenadier Guards</i> | <i>Extra Equerries to the King:</i> | |
| | Brigadier Sir Norman Gwatkin | | Gun-carriage bearing the coffin; on the coffin the Crown and the Regalia and Insignia of the Order of the Garter | | Lt.-Col. Sir Terence Nugent | |
| <i>Gentlemen- at-Arms and Yeomen of the Guard</i> | Air Commo- dore Edward Fielden | <i>Equerries to the King:</i> | | <i>Equerries to the King:</i> | Group Capt. Peter Townsend | <i>Gentlemen- at-Arms and Yeomen of the Guard</i> |
| | Commander Peter Ashmore | Capt. Lord Plunket | | Captain Viscount Althorp | Sir Arthur Penn | |
| | Vice- Admiral Charles Lambe | Major Sir Michael Adeane | | Captain Sir Harold Campbell | Major Earl of Leicester | |
| | <i>Escort Commander</i> | | <i>Naval Gun Crew</i> | | <i>Field Officer of Escort</i> | |
| | <i>Standard Coverer</i> | | <i>Sovereign's Standard</i> | | <i>Trumpeter</i> | |
| <i>In a carriage: The Queen and the Queen Mother, Princess Margaret, the Princess Royal</i> | | | | | | |
| <i>Adjutant-General to the Forces, General Sir John Crocker</i> | | | | | | |
| The Duke of Kent | | The Duke of Windsor | | The Duke of Gloucester | | The Duke of Edinburgh |
| <i>Field Officer in Brigade Waiting, Col. C. G. Gordon-Lennox</i> | | <i>Personal Naval A.D.C. to the King, Vice-Admiral Earl Mountbatten of Burma</i> | | <i>Gold Stick in Waiting, Major-General Sir Richard Howard-Vyse</i> | | <i>Silver Stick in Waiting, Col. F. F. B. St. George</i> |
| <i>Heads of State and Members of British and Foreign Royal Families:</i> | | | | | | |
| President of the French Republic | | King of Denmark | | King of the Hellenes | | King of Sweden |
| President of the Praesidium of the Yugoslav Republic | | | King of Iraq | | | President of the Turkish Republic |
| Crown Prince of Jordan | | | Crown Prince of Norway | | | Crown Prince of Ethiopia |
| Prince of Liège | | Prince of Luxembourg | | Prince of the Netherlands | | Prince Ali Reza |
| Prince Axel of Denmark | | Prince Zeid of Iraq | | | | Marshal Shah Wali Khan |
| Prince Buu-Loc | | | | Prince Wan Waithayakon | | |
| The Marquess of Carisbrooke | | The Earl of Harewood | | The Hon. Gerald Lascelles | | |
| The Marquess of Milford Haven | | The Marquess of Cambridge | | Admiral the Hon. Sir Alexander Ramsay | | |
| Lord Carnegie | | Capt. Alexander Ramsay | | Major the Earl of Southesk | | |

After members of the Royal Family came the Commonwealth High Commissioners, Representatives of the Republic of Ireland, and the heads of specially appointed foreign delegations. The last included Mr. Dean Acheson, representing the President of the United States, and the Soviet Ambassador. Following were the Adjutant in Brigade Waiting, the Crown Equerry and Silver Stick Adjutant. Then came six carriages as follows:

First Carriage: King of Norway, Queen of the Netherlands, Duchess of Gloucester, Duchess of Kent.

Second Carriage: Queen of Denmark, Queen of Sweden, Princess Marie Louise, Lady Patricia Ramsay.

Third Carriage: Grand Duchess of Luxembourg, Princess Astrid of Norway, Marchioness of Carisbrooke, Marchioness of Cambridge.



FOLLOWING THE BIER

In the funeral procession from Westminster Hall to Paddington Station, and again through the streets of Windsor to St. George's Chapel in Windsor Castle, the four Royal Dukes, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Duke of Gloucester, the Duke of Windsor and the Duke of Kent, followed the coffin on foot. Behind them walked Earl Mountbatten of Burma and the Kings and Heads of foreign States, including the King of Denmark, the King of the Hellenes, the King of Sweden, President Auriol of France, the President of the Turkish Republic, the King of Iraq and the President of Yugoslavia.

Fourth Carriage: Duchess of Beaufort, Lady Helena Gibbs, Countess Mountbatten of Burma, Countess of Harewood.

Fifth Carriage: Mistress of the Robes (Dowager Duchess of Northumberland), Lady-in-Waiting to the Queen Mother (Countess of Scarborough), Grande Maitresse to the Queen of the Netherlands, Lady-in-Waiting to the Queen of Denmark.

Sixth Carriage: Woman of the Bedchamber to the Queen (Lady Margaret Hay), Woman of the Bedchamber to the Queen Mother (Lady Katherine Seymour), Lady-in-Waiting to the Queen of Sweden, Lady-in-Waiting to the Grand Duchess of Luxembourg.

Following the carriages were members of the Royal Households, which included the King's surgeons and physicians, suites of foreign royalties, members of foreign governments and the second division of Sovereign's Escort, Household Cavalry. Then came officers of foreign services, the band of the Royal Engineers and a police band, a police contingent, and the procession concluded with representatives of the Fire Services and the Civil Defence Corps.



THE FUNERAL PROCESSION TURNING

Great crowds had gathered along the processional route since the early hours of the morning. Many had chosen points of vantage the night before. In their tens of thousands they stood in the chill wind of that wintry morning of Friday, 15 February, as the procession swung



FROM PICCADILLY INTO HYDE PARK

right from Piccadilly into Hyde Park. As the cortège moved into the narrow entrance to the park the bearer party divided and walked through the two outer arches. The Royal Standard was carried aloft behind the coffin, followed by the Queen's carriage and the Royal Dukes.



UNDER THE WALLS OF WINDSOR CASTLE

Under the grey walls of Windsor Castle, a royal palace and fortress since the days of William the Conqueror, the funeral procession neared the end of its journey. In Windsor, as in London, the streets were filled by vast crowds, loyally paying this last homage to the dead Sovereign. Here inside the gates of the Castle the narrow processional way was lined by Guardsmen as the gun-carriage drawn by naval ratings went towards St. George's Chapel.



THE CORTÈGE ARRIVES AT THE CHAPEL

Just after two o'clock the procession reached the steps of St. George's Chapel. The King's coffin was carried up to the west door while the air was filled with the eerie sound of the bosuns' pipes. With the Queen's carriage at the foot of the steps, Service chiefs saluted the coffin as it was carried into the chapel. The bearer party was preceded by the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl Marshal in full-dress uniform, the Lord Chamberlain and the Lord Steward.



THE LAST SCENES AT WINDSOR

The bearer party of the King's Company, Grenadier Guards (*above*) carry the coffin into St. George's Chapel. Following the coffin are Queen Elizabeth (the Queen Mother), the Queen, Princess Margaret and the Princess Royal. Behind them again come the Duke of Kent, the Duke of Windsor, the Duke of Gloucester and the Duke of Edinburgh, while on the steps at the right can be seen Field-Marshal Lord Montgomery, Lord Ironside, Lord Alanbrooke and Sir William Slim. The Archbishop of Canterbury conducted the service, which ended with the coffin sinking through the floor of the chapel to the royal vault. "Forasmuch as it has pleased Almighty God of His great mercy to take unto Himself the soul of our dear brother here departed, we therefore commit his body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. . . ." So the body of King George VI was laid in the traditional resting place of kings, as the Queen scattered a handful of earth on the coffin.





FLORAL TRIBUTES TO THE LATE KING

Wreaths of every design and size from every part of the world, from Sovereigns and Governments, from personal friends and from the people at large, from rich and poor alike, arrived at Windsor for the King's funeral. They were set out within the Castle precincts near St. George's Chapel, where they were seen by over a quarter of a million people, many of whom came hundreds of miles to make this final pilgrimage and add their own floral tributes of early spring flowers, gathered in their own gardens or near their homes, to the colourful array. Their personal offerings epitomized the sorrow of the whole world.

FOR GALLANTRY

The official wreath sent by the Government was in the form of the George Cross and was inscribed: "In loyal and affectionate memory of their august Sovereign King George VI the Royal founder of the George Cross, with humble duty from Her Majesty's Government," and signed "Winston S. Churchill."



Message from the Queen Mother

I want to send this message of thanks to a multitude of people—to you who, from all parts of the world, have been giving me your sympathy and affection throughout these dark days. I want you to know how your concern for me has upheld me in my sorrow, and how proud you have made me by your wonderful tributes to my dear husband, a great and noble King. No man had a deeper sense than he of duty and of service, and no man was more full of compassion for his fellow-men. He loved you all, every one of you, most truly. That, you know, was what he always tried to tell you in his yearly message at Christmas; that was the pledge that he took at the sacred moment of his coronation fifteen years ago. Now I am left alone, to do what I can to honour that pledge without him.

Throughout our married life we have tried, the King and I, to fulfil with all our hearts and all our strength the great task of service that was laid upon us. My only wish now is that I may be allowed to continue the work that we sought to do together.

I commend to you our dear daughter: give her your loyalty and devotion: in the great and lonely station to which she has been called she will need your protection and your love.

God bless you all; and may He in his wisdom guide us safely to our true destiny of peace and good will.

INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS

- ABERGELDIE, 20
 Aircraft factory, 98
 Alexandra, H.M. Queen, 31
 Anne, H.R.H. Princess, christening, 120
 Armed forces, inspection of, 94, 95, 96
 Armistice Day, 1946, 122
 Australia, tour of, 37, 39
 Australian forces, inspection of, 96
 war memorial (1914-18), 74

 BALMORAL, 134
 Bermondsey, 1940, 102
 Billotte, General, 75
 Bomb damage, 100, 101, 102
 Bowes-Lyon, the Hon. David, 30
 Lady Elizabeth, 30, 31
 Boys' Camp, Duke of York's, 68
 Brussels Exhibition, 49
 Bruton Street, 37
 Buckingham Palace, 7, 11, 50-1, 62, 63, 100, 112

 CAERNARVON CASTLE, 66
 Canada, Royal tour, 78-83, 88, 89
 Canberra, opening of Parliament, 39
 Canterbury, Archbishop of, 31, 53
 Cape Town, 123, 124
 Cenotaph, the, 61, 122
 Champs-Élysées, 73
 Charles, H.R.H. Prince, 120, 134, 135
 Churchill, the Rt. Hon. Winston S., 93, 112
 Church of Scotland, General Assembly of, 46
 Commons, new House of, 132
 Connaught Square, Ottawa, 83
 Coronation of H.M. King George VI, 56-65

 DESBOROUGH, Lord, 21
 Devonport, 24
 Downing Street, 92, 93
 Drury Lane, Theatre Royal, 136

 EDINBURGH, 44-5, 50, 51
 Edinburgh, H.R.H. Duke of, 120, 127, 133, 134, 137, 141, 144, 151, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157
 Edward VII, H.M. King, funeral, 22-3
 Edward VIII, H.M. King, abdication, 55; *see also* Windsor, H.R.H. Duke of
 Eisenhower, General, 109
 Elizabeth, H.R.H. Princess, 4, 51, 63, 89, 103, 105, 112, 120, 125, 126, 134, 136, 137
 birth, 36
 wedding, 127, 128-9
See also Elizabeth II, H.M. Queen
 Elizabeth, H.M. Queen (the Queen Mother), 7, 8, 56, 63, 66, 67, 69, 70, 71, 74, 81, 82, 85, 88, 89, 93, 98, 99, 100, 101, 103, 104, 105, 112, 114, 115, 116, 120, 124, 125, 126, 127, 131, 132, 133, 134, 136, 137, 145, 155
 message to the nation, 159
See also York, H.R.H. Duchess of
 Elizabeth II, H.M. Queen, 141, 145, 155, 157; *see also* Elizabeth, H.R.H. Princess
 Exeter Cathedral, 8

 FAMILY TREE, 16-17
 Festival of Britain, 133

 France, inspection of troops in, 94, 95
 State visit to, 72-5
 French Colonial Exhibition, 49
 Funeral of H.M. King George VI, 143, 144-59
 order of Procession, 148, 150, 151
 route of London Procession, 149

 GEORGE V, H.M. King, 20, 27, 31, 34, 50, 52, 53
 Glamis Castle, 30
 Glasgow Exhibition, 70, 71
 Gloucester, H.R.H. Duke of, 18, 20, 34, 133
 Gort, Lord, 95, 107
 Great Bookham fête, 29

 HADRIAN'S VILLA, 111
 Halifax, 88
 Halifax, Lord, 75
 Hall Place fête, 29
 Hampton Wick, 43
 Hansell, Mr., 21
 Hospital tours, 77
 Hyde Park, Empire Day (1928), 42
 Hyde Park, New York State, 85

 INDUSTRIAL TOURS, 76, 98, 99
 Investiture, 97
 Isle of Man, 116
 Italy, 1944, 110, 111

 JOHANNESBURG, 125
 John, H.R.H. Prince, 20

 KENT, H.R.H. Duchess of, 51
 Kent, H.R.H. Duke of (the late), 20, 51
 Kent, H.R.H. Duke of, 151
 King George V Playing Fields, 43

 LADYSMITH, 125
 Lascelles, Viscount, 34, 50
 Lebrun, President, 73, 75
 Leicester Square, 114
 Lewisham, Victory tour, 114
 Local Defence Volunteers, 95
 London Airport, farewell, 137

 MACKENZIE KING, Mr., 79, 82
 Mall, Victory march, 90
 Malta, G.C., Royal visit, 106-7
 Manhattan, 86-7
 Margaret, H.R.H. Princess, 8, 50, 51, 54, 63, 89, 103, 105, 112, 125, 126, 133, 134, 137, 145, 155
 birth, 47
 Mary, H.M. Queen (the Dowager Queen Mother), 20, 31, 34, 51, 120, 133, 145
 Methodist Churches of Great Britain, Deed of Union, 46
 Montgomery, General, 108
 Montreal, 82

 NAPLES, Bay of, 110
 Naval Cadet, Prince Albert as, 24, 25
 New York State, 85, 86-7
 New Zealand, tour of, 38
 Normandy, 1944, 109
 North Africa, 108

 OLD FORD, Coronation decorations, 65
 Order of the Garter, ceremony, 67
 Osborne, 18
 Ottawa, 82, 83
 Oudtshoorn, 125

 POLESDEN LACEY, 32, 33
 Princess Royal, H.R.H. the, 18, 20, 34, 50, 133
 Proclamation of H.M. Queen Elizabeth II, 142

 QUEBEC, 78, 79, 80, 81

 RHODES, Cecil, grave, 126
 Roosevelt, President, 85
 memorial, 130
 Rotorua, 38
 Royal Air Force (fly-past), 11
 Royal Lodge, 4, 54, 103

 ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL, Windsor, 53, 155, 156
 Sandringham, 104, 138, 143, 144
 Scotland, visits to, 44-5, 46, 50, 51, 70, 71
 Scott-Lidgett, Dr., 46
 Serbia, Crown Prince of, 26
 Silver Jubilee of H.M. King George V, 50-1
 Silver Wedding of H.M. King George VI, 131
 South Africa, Royal tour, 123-6
 Southwold Boys' Camp, 68
 Spithead review, 25
 Strathmore, Earl of, 30
 Sunderland shipyard workers, 98

 TABLE MOUNTAIN, 123
 Tees Bridge, opening of, 48
 Tower Bridge, guns' salute, 52, 140
 Trafalgar Square, 113
 Tripoli, 1943, 108
 Truman, President, 117
 Tynwald, 116

 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, Royal visit, 84-7

 Versailles, 75
 Victoria, H.M. Queen, 18
 Victory celebrations, 90, 112-15, 118-19
 Villeneuve, Cardinal, 81
 Villers-Bretonneux war memorial, 74

 WAR CABINET, 92
 Washington, 84
 Wembley Exhibition, 34, 35
 Westminster Abbey, 31, 56
 Westminster Hall, lying in State, 146-7
 Whitehall, funeral cortège, 144
 White Lodge, 33
 Wilhelm II, Kaiser, 23
 Windsor, 4, 54, 69, 103, 104, 105
 funeral scenes, 154-9; *see also* Funeral of H.M. King George VI
 Windsor, H.R.H. Duke of, 151; *see also* Edward VIII, H.M. King
 Wolfe's Cove, 79

 YORK, H.R.H. Duchess of, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 47, 48, 49, 51; *see also* Elizabeth H.M. Queen (the Queen Mother)
 York, H.R.H. Duke of (activities), 28, 29, 34, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44-5, 46, 48, 49, 50, 51, 54
 engagement, 30
 honeymoon, 32, 33
 wedding, 31
 Ypres Cathedral, 27

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275
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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF
KING
GEORGE VI

1895-1952

